

Reimagining the Nation: Representations of Great Britain in Owenson, Austen, and Scott

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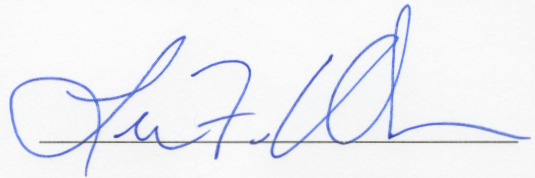
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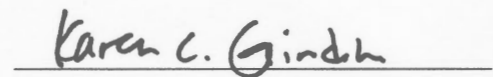
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Introduction: National Performance

Benedict Anderson has deeply influenced scholarly understanding of the nation and nationalism in relation to print culture. In his persuasively titled book, *Imagined Communities*, Anderson argues that the nation should not be viewed in terms of ideology—such as “liberalism or fascism”—but, rather, in terms of “kinship and religion” (Anderson 5). For Anderson, the source of this kinship traces back to the novel and the newspaper, both products of industrialization and the concurrent development of print-capitalism. Together, through the 18th and 19th centuries, the standardization of print-language through the newspaper and the novel connected individuals in radically new ways. These novels and newspapers presented their readers with a sense of simultaneity and connectedness; for example, Sir Walter Scott’s first historical novel, *Waverley*, offered readers an interpretation of history that they could all share—the popularity of the novel further reinforced this viewpoint.¹ Shared experiences like this form the basis of Anderson’s definition of the nation. His definition is based upon four terms: imagined, limited, sovereign, and community. For Anderson, the nation is “*imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members [...] yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion”; “*limited* because even the largest [nation] [...] has finite [...] boundaries, beyond which lie other nations”; “*sovereign* because [...] nations dream of being free, and, if under God, directly so”; and, finally, nations are communities because they are “always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship” (emphasis in original, 6-7). In this project I shall be looking specifically at Sydney Owenson’s *The Wild Irish Girl*, Jane Austen’s *Emma*, and Scott’s *Waverley* in order to explore and test Anderson’s concept of the

nation as imagined community.

Anderson's definition of the nation has not come without criticism. Cairns Craig's "Scott's Staging of the Nation," for example, offers a harsh critique of Anderson's theory. According to Craig, the term "imagined communities" conflates the political process of nations with imagination, disallowing any distinction "between the imagining of 'political' communities and the imagining of other communities" (Craig 17). This is problematic for Craig because nations are both political and cultural formations. As such, Anderson's term does not "distinguish between the nation as agent, enacting its imagined possibilities through political institutions, and the nation in imagination, in its cultural self-reflections" (18). Likewise, Brook Thomas has also found the term "imagined communities" to be limiting, albeit in a different way than Craig. For Thomas, it is not that the term "imagined community" is ineffective, but rather that it is incomplete. Thomas argues that viewing the nation as an imagined community implies a sense of homogeneity that denies the differences between the various groups that make up a nation. Thus, Thomas suggests a parent term under which imagined communities can fall: imagined societies. The difference between an "imagined community" and an "imagined society" is comparable to the distinction Barthes makes between "work" and "text": "The nation as imagined community is like Barthes's 'work,' which is an organicism that grows by 'vital expansion, by development.'" In contrast, the nation as imagined society is like his 'text,' which is a network, 'the result of a combinatorial systematic'" (Thomas 149). In other words, Thomas views the nation as an "imagined society" consisting of a complex network of various hegemonic imagined communities.

The fundamental problem that both Thomas and Craig note is the passivity of

Anderson's term. Although the term "imagined communities" is quite useful for understanding the nation as a socially constructed historical artifact, the implied passivity of being an artifact does not seem to suit the evolving nature of nations. I began to take notice of these limitations myself after noticing the following line: "in the modern world everyone can, should, will 'have' a nationality, as he or she 'has' a gender" (Anderson 5). To do Anderson credit, his book was originally published in 1983—years before Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* helped reconfigure our concepts of gender. To do him further credit, the distancing quotations around his use of the words "have" and "has" reveal a slight sense of trepidation. This project seeks to "reimagine" imagined communities by considering them in terms of performativity. In other words, just as gender "identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (Butler 25), nationality, too, is constituted by the collective actions of a nation's citizens.

The novel plays a particularly important role in the formation of imagined communities for two reasons. First, novels invoke a sense of simultaneity. Anderson proffers that "the structure of the old-fashioned novel [...] is clearly a device for the presentation of simultaneity in 'homogenous, empty time,' or a complex gloss upon the word 'meanwhile'" (Anderson 25). In short, the novel offered readers a fictional microcosm of their own society. By depicting simultaneous events carried out by characters that may or may not know each other, the novel shows how individuals are connected through their embeddedness in society.² Secondly, the physicality of popular novels became concrete manifestations of a connected community. Print-capitalists were, of course, interested in turning a profit. Thus, not only were booksellers constantly on the hunt for the next potential best seller,³ but—in true capitalist form—they attempted to

market these books to the largest possible audience. In order to increase their target-audience, booksellers began to print cheaper editions in the vernaculars (38). The result of this was a standardization of print-language which revolutionized the efficiency of communication.⁴ As an added effect, popular novels became cultural touchstones for communities of readers; the popularity of Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley*, for instance, not only gave its many readers a shared view of the past, but united them in the present through a shared cultural understanding. The ritualized act of reading became a kind of worship for the nation-form; through the shared practice of reading popular novels, readers became increasingly adept at imagining their society as an agent, moving and acting amongst other active societies.

Together, the works of Owenson, Austen, and Scott reveal the evolution of the nation-form. As the national tale evolved, it moved from decrying the lack of cultural coherence between England and its neighbors in *The Wild Irish Girl* to intertwining nationalism with "good conduct" in Austen's *Emma*. As national belonging was increasingly conceived of as an action, rather than a passive inheritance, nations became viewed as active players on a global stage. As the conduct of national citizens increasingly defined national character, Scott's reinvention of the historical novel pushed the concept of national unity into the past—making it feel as though it was always already apparent. Reimagining the past became a way of establishing national continuity in the present. Ultimately, the works of Owenson, Austen, and Scott each re-present the nation and, with each re-presentation, they show the necessity of reimagining the nation as an active process.

Following Benedict Anderson's assertion that the novel "provided the technical

means for 're-presenting' the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation," I shall examine the evolving role of the national tale and the historical novel in "re-presenting" Great Britain (Anderson 25). Beginning with Sydney Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl*, I will show how early national tales sought to reconfigure British interpellations of 'other' identities. Although it is typically viewed as a failure, Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* is better understood as a novel *about* failure as opposed to a failed novel. Owenson's first national tale describes the failure to effectively unify English and Irish culture through the Act of Union in 1800 because the focus of the laws was on legality rather than on a mutual understanding of culture. Problematically, however, Owenson's tendency towards autoexoticism was at odds with her desire for cultural coherence. It is with this in mind that I read Jane Austen's *Emma* as a response to the national tale's form. Unlike *The Wild Irish Girl* and many other national tales, *Emma* does not take place outside of England. Austen challenges the typical form of the national tale by keeping the reader firmly lodged in a thoroughly English village, Highbury. In fact, the reader is barely able to leave Highbury at all—save for a brief trip to Box Hill, seven miles outside of Highbury. Without the element of travel, Austen is able to depict a cultural encounter between varying modes of Englishness. Ultimately, Austen's biggest contribution to the national tale's form is her intertwining of Englishness with conduct. By entangling these two concepts, Austen sets up nationality as a kind of performance or conduct; she uses the plot of *Emma* to suggest that being English means being able to read, discern, and evaluate Englishness's varying and evolving forms. Sir Walter Scott, like Austen, links national belonging to conduct. However, unlike Austen, Scott attempts to create cultural coherence through a shared understanding of the past. Through careful temporal

mechanics, Scott's first historical novel reimagines history in such a way as to make England and Scotland always already united. Ultimately, Scott suggests that understanding the past is an active process that influences present circumstances. Thus, Scott shows how reimagining national history creates a continuity that buries divisive borders in the distant past.

Notes

¹ According to *The Cambridge Companion to Fiction in the Romantic Period*, Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* sold approximately forty-thousand copies between 1814 and 1836. As a point of reference, this is nearly eight times the combined sales of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma* (41).

² Anderson writes, "The idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogenous empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history" (26).

³ Anderson writes, "Naturally, booksellers were primarily concerned to make a profit and to sell their products, and consequently they sought out first and foremost those works which were of interest to the largest possible number of their contemporaries" (38).

⁴ Anderson writes, "Speakers of the huge variety of Frenches, Englishes, or Spanishes, who might find it difficult or even impossible to understand one another in conversation, became capable of comprehending one another via print and paper [...]. These fellow-readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed [...] the embryo of the nationally imagined community" (44).

Chapter 1: Wild Irish Authorizations: Paratextual Counter-Mapping in Sydney

Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl*

Sydney Owenson's 1806 romance, *The Wild Irish Girl: A National Tale*, is a historically curious artifact for two reasons. On the one hand, it is the first national tale—or at least the first national tale to boldly call itself such. On the other hand, many who look into this curious historical first leave feeling disappointed.¹ *The Wild Irish Girl's* narrative contains but a few brief moments where the reader cannot help being swept up into the drama of Horatio and Glorvina's strange and nearly incestuous romance. Yet, it rarely takes long for these moments to digress into forced conversations dealing with Irish history and national identity or, in other cases, to become overburdened by Owenson's excessive and lengthy footnotes. Indeed, despite its popularity upon release, many of *The Wild Irish Girl's* critics were quick to attack Owenson's national tale specifically for its paratextual interruptions. For example, in 1806, *The Critical Review* humorously lamented: "While the tear of sensibility is swelling in the eye of her fair reader at the woes and virtues of the interesting heroine, it is frequently checked by an elaborate dissertation on the Irish harp, or a lengthened argument on the comparative antiquity of the Scotch or Irish poetry" (328). While many other reviewers shared *The Critical Review's* opinion, many of them could not help but praise the thinly veiled goals of the very interruptions they lamented. For example, *The Monthly Review* noted, "It cannot but be obvious that one great end, which the writer of this work proposed to herself, was the bringing the Irish forwards to our view, and to urge with effect their various claims. The purpose is benevolent: but perhaps this is not the way to accomplish it" (Tay 381). There is a curious irony in praising Owenson's perceived intents yet

attacking her execution; these narrative interruptions that so many found annoying are also, seemingly, the very elements which drew their interest in the first place.

It is surprising that many of the critics who cite Owenson's first national tale as a failure miss not only this irony but also the overabundance of failure as a consistent motif within the romance's narrative. Most critics have followed Barry Sloan's suggestion that *The Wild Irish Girl* "indulges in special pleading, aimed at improving the image of Ireland and her people among English readers" (Sloan 9). Sloan isn't incorrect; Owenson's goal, as both the early reviewers and modern critics have put it, was to offer a sympathetic view of Ireland. The reader follows Horatio as he angrily enters Ireland with a decided prejudice and finds himself surprised by the hospitality and kind manners of the Irish. The novel is written in epistolary form and, as Sloan suggests, Horatio's "disillusionment and his discovery of the true nature of [Ireland] is intended to be the reader's experience also" (9). Yet, if the implied English readers are meant to share Horatio's experience of Ireland so that they can see an "improved" view of Ireland, then one must question the language Horatio uses to describe this new view. Throughout the novel Horatio uses predatory language to describe his sketches of the countryside, implying that he has failed to adopt a non-imperialistic understanding of Ireland. Masquerading as an artist, Horatio claims to the Prince of Inismore that he "came to Ireland to *take* views, and *seize* some of the finest features of its landscapes; that having heard much of the wildly picturesque charms of the north-west coasts, [he] had *penetrated* thus far into this remote corner of the province of Connaught" (emphasis added, 56).² Although the narrative ends with Horatio maintaining a slightly less exotic mental image of Ireland, Horatio still views Ireland with the gaze of a predator. In the last

letter Horatio sends to J.D., his friend in Parliament, he laments his inability to capture Ireland's space and its inhabitants: "Where now are those refreshing scenes on which my rapt gaze so lately dwelt [...]. Where are those original and simple characters; those habits, those manners?" (225). Here, what upsets Horatio is the fact that Ireland has not remained sufficiently static for his tastes. Horatio's "rapt gaze" can no longer find the same views that he had previously hoped to *take* or *seize*.³

Horatio's failure to adjust his understanding of Ireland is matched by his failures to learn the Irish language, to teach Glorvina to draw, and to marry Glorvina by the end of the narrative.⁴ If this last claim seems surprising—and to many it might because numerous critics have claimed a happy marriage at the end of the romance—it is because the narrative gives us something much like a marriage: a *potential* marriage.⁵ While not technically a failure, it is my belief that this not-quite-failure—this *potential* marriage—is illustrative of the struggles Irish national identity was facing at the turn of the 19th century: continually finding ways to manifest potential national identities while still remaining somehow "incomplete."⁶ In this chapter, I intend to show that understanding *The Wild Irish Girl* as a failure ignores much of Owenson's complex mediation of the romance's narrative. The ultimate failure in (not of) this national tale belongs to Horatio for being consistently unable to represent Irish identity from his English standpoint. Owenson's paratextual intrusions can therefore be read as interruptions to Horatio's interpellations; that is, Owenson's overwhelming quantity of footnotes assert a distinct Irish identity to disrupt the sea of Horatio's (England's) representations of Irish identity. The fact that these are the aspects which most consider to be failures only further drives *The Wild Irish Girl's* argument, which is that a distinct Irish identity cannot be created

while it is buried under English representations.

The remainder of this chapter shall be divided up into three sections: the first explores *The Wild Irish Girl*'s historical context in terms of the British surveys of Ireland performed in the 18th century. In this first section I will discuss the ways cartography and geography organize our sense of identity as well as our sense of others' identities. The second section will show the relationship between these surveillance projects and Horatio's gaze, revealing Owenson's commentary on the English imperial gaze. Finally, in my third section, I will shift my discussion to *The Wild Irish Girl*'s elaborate paratext in order to show how Owenson uses footnotes as a counter-mapping strategy that disrupts English interpellations of Ireland, effectively asserting an Irish national identity distinct from the English representations of it.

Cartographic Surveillance and Epistemological Violence

In discussing *The Wild Irish Girl*'s historical context, many critics have placed emphasis on the novel's relationship with the Act of Union, which, in 1800, legally created the United Kingdom out of England and Ireland. While the Act of Union influenced Owenson's first national tale, it would be a mistake to believe that this is the *only* historical event that influenced it. The Act of Union did not occur in a vacuum. In fact, Horatio's aforementioned imperial gaze along with his chosen disguise as a landscape artist hint more at the English cartographic and surveillance enterprises of the 18th and 19th century than at the Act of Union. In this section I shall discuss how the interdisciplinary nature of 18th century cartographic surveys not only created sets of practices that carried into and influenced English cartography in the 19th century, but also created products—maps, sketches, descriptions, etc.—which offered new ways of seeing,

looking, and gazing upon nations. In doing so, cartography helped establish geography as an empirical, natural science.⁷

Although the (in)famous Ordnance Survey of Ireland did not officially begin until 1824 (within two decades after the publication of *The Wild Irish Girl*), its roots began in many of the mapping projects in England, Ireland, and Scotland during the mid-eighteenth century.⁸ Following the Jacobite Uprising of 1745 the English gained a renewed interest in cartography, particularly for the purpose of social control. Although the English were able to put down the Jacobite rebellion in Scotland, they did so in spite of their lack of geographical knowledge; the English were suddenly made very aware of their poor understanding of Scotland's space (Hewitt xviii-xix). Even before the rebellion, many saw a relationship between the Highlanders and Scottish space. The mountains surrounding the Highlands naturally provided a barrier which isolated the Highlanders from more "civilized" influences (12-13). The English believed that by attaining "a perfect knowledge of the country" they could create unity in Scotland while pacifying the population (qtd. in Hewitt 13). Although The Military Survey of Scotland was preemptively called off due to the start of the Seven Years War, this survey holds an important position in the understanding of Western geography as it produced some of the first national maps that utilized actual ground measurements unlike earlier maps which were constructed based on charted estimates (Hewitt 42). This move towards actually considering the physical space of another culture would prove massively influential to the cartographic projects that followed in Ireland.

In the mid 1760's, just after the Military Survey of Scotland was put to an abrupt halt, a man famous for his oft-refuted and anachronistic antiquarianism was posted as an

engineer in Ireland and put in charge of creating a full map of Ireland; this man was General Charles Vallancey. Although Vallancey is mostly known for the wild claims of his Irish antiquarian studies—notably his claim that Gaelic is Phoenician in origin—few have recognized his contributions to cartography.⁹ Between 1776 and 1796 Vallancey made a series of military sketches of southern Ireland (Andrews, *A Paper Landscape* 3).¹⁰ Although he never completed his goal of mapping the entirety of Ireland, his military sketches became part of his *Military Itinerary of South Ireland*. Vallancey's *Military Itinerary* is not merely a presentation of his military sketches—far from it. His lengthy itinerary opens with a discussion about the importance of using maps and cartographic awareness to protect Ireland from French invasion. It proceeds to offer detailed descriptions of the strategic advantages and disadvantages of various spaces along with statistics recording the typical climates at various times of the year, the position of the tide, various plans for the distribution of ordnance supplies in the event of war, imaginary battle strategies, and even brief discussions of the religious and political affiliations of various spaces.

In the following passage, which can serve as a general representation of the report's interdisciplinary nature, Vallancey discusses the “material differences” between the English and the Irish in order to provide evidence of the efficacy of his military strategies and sketches:

[T]here is a very material difference, between England and Ireland: in the first, there is no claim, even in the mind, to the confiscated property of their ancestors: there are no great bodies of the people assembled in any given place, differing from the established religion; the tenantry and peasantry have higher wages and

are better treated than in Ireland, and the maintenance of the Catholic Clergy, is not felt, because of their paucity: whereas, in Ireland, every farmer must pay double tythes, one to the established Church, and one to the priest (Vallancey, qtd. in O'Reilly 173-74).

In the paratext Vallancey continues his thoughts on religion and their relationship to national loyalty:

This is one of the strongest reasons, if not the principal, of the disaffection of the lower orders of Catholics, in this Country:-- Could Government take the Church lands into their own hands, the Protestant incumbents might be beneficed by Government, the full receipt of their present incomes, and there would be a superabundance for the Catholic Clergy, who would thereby become dependent on Government. As long as our Irish House of Commons owe their fortunes to Church Leases, this desideratum can never be expected to take place. (qtd. in O'Reilly 173-74).

Clearly, Vallancey's antiquarian interests played a large role in the creation of this impressive document. In his discussion of interior defense that was sent along with his military sketches, he moves away from discussing the physical land and instead discusses the religious makeup of south Ireland. In this discussion, Vallancey shows the relationship between the tolerance of religion and military strategy; he believes that religious intolerance will make the oppressed Catholics more likely to side with an enemy in the event of an invasion. Therefore, Vallancey reveals the value in creating these interdisciplinary reports as they are capable of situating various disciplines together in order to perfect a military strategy. The interdisciplinary nature of this text would

eventually go on to influence the later Irish Ordnance Surveys (*APL* 144).

As previously stated, many of these surveys were conducted in order to gain social control over another space.¹¹ The English believed that the collection of various kinds of information could assist in the control of the space and the people that occupied it. By assembling and organizing information into easily consumable and identifiable representations, the English surveys participated in legitimizing the information they provided to the reader.¹² Ultimately, as maps became increasingly powerful tools for representing a wide range of information, they became indispensable tools for not only the military, but for the general public as well.¹³ Maps gave both the military and the general public classifying power; the viewer was able to look upon the represented space and identify the shape and image of nations. As nations' shapes became "increasingly recognizable," they began to act as "logos" which "penetrated deep into the popular imagination, forming a powerful emblem for the anticolonial nationalisms being born" (Anderson 175). In order to understand the power that cartographic knowledge holds over individuals, it is important to keep in mind that these "maps-as-logos" not only allow people to identify themselves—this is where *I* am from; this is *my* country—but also the limits to the space we identify with, outside of which lie other spaces with *other* identities.¹⁴ These "logos" led to what Mary Louise Pratt calls Europe's "planetary consciousness," which, for Pratt, is "marked by an orientation toward interior exploration and the construction of global-scale meaning through the descriptive apparatuses of natural history" (Pratt 15). However, Pratt claims this planetary consciousness was specifically Europe's—referring to it as a "version" of planetary consciousness. This point is critical because it suggests the existence of other "versions" of planetary

consciousness that get effaced by epistemological violence.

Ultimately, these surveys granted an epistemological power to their viewers and allowed both the military and the general public to narrate the identity of *other* spaces.¹⁵ In a very important sense the popularization of maps in the general public allowed the average citizen to take part in reinforcing Others' cultural identities.¹⁶ The fixed image on the map that represents the nation creates the illusion of a fixed and reductive identity for a homogenized people—in Ireland's case a fixed and incomplete identity frozen within the past.¹⁷ As we shall see in the upcoming section, Horatio is best understood as a "seeing-man," a term Pratt uses to describe the protagonist of an anti-conquest novel "whose imperial eyes passively look out and possess" (7). At first glance—indeed, even after many glances—it seems strange that Owenson would choose an English protagonist for her Irish national tale. Equally strange is Owenson's epistolary style which, because the protagonist is English—and writing to a friend in England's parliament—means that the majority of the narrative is mediated through an English narrator to an English governmental official. However, as I shall argue in this upcoming section, Owenson's choice of protagonist is more sensible than might initially appear. By mediating nearly the entire novel from Horatio's written perspective, Owenson gains the ability to carefully critique England's imperial gaze by revealing how fragile and fraught with anxiety it really is.

Horatio's Petrifying Imperial Gaze

As Katja Jylkka has noted, Owenson's biography of *Salvator Rosa* suggests her understanding of the relationship between visual representation and social control (Jylkka 85). For Owenson, imagery has a "magical" power to "[strike] upon the dullest

apprehensions and [intimidate] the hardest conscience” (Owenson, *Salvator* 2). Artists, therefore, take on the role of “state-engines” as they have the ability to inspire faith—or dash it—with their representations (3). Thus it is not by chance or accident that Owenson ties Horatio’s disguise and activities in with the various surveys of Ireland and with art; not only does Horatio disguise himself as a landscape artist for most of the novel, but, for a brief moment, he considers collecting various statistical information about Ireland. Indeed, in the final introductory letter Horatio asks J.D., his friend in Parliament, for a thermometer and instructs him to “expect [his] letters [...] to be only filled with the summary results of meteoric instruments, and synoptical views of common phenomena” (*WIG* 11). In modern terms the connection between the thermometer and the sketch pad may seem obscure at best. However in *The Wild Irish Girl*’s historical context the connection was, perhaps, much clearer: both statistics and sketches provide a means of gazing at a space. Like Vallancey who could see the relationship between religious affiliation and military strategy, Owenson could see the relationships between the collection of statistical information, visual art, and national identity.

Owenson made a careful and tactical decision when she chose the thoroughly English Horatio as the protagonist of her first national tale. By presenting Ireland through the eyes of an Englishman, Owenson gained the ability to comment upon England’s seemingly omnipresent imperial gaze. As stated above, it is quite useful to think of Horatio as though he were the “seeing man” in an “anti-conquest” novel. From the very onset, the reader is made very much aware of Horatio’s imperial gaze. In this introductory letter Horatio complains—like a petulant child—that his father chose to send him to Ireland for his punishment, as opposed to somewhere more interesting:

Had he banished me to the savage desolations of Siberia, my exile would have had some character [...] But sent to a country against which I have a decided prejudice—which I suppose semi-barbarous, semi-civilized; has lost the strong and hardy features of savage life, without acquiring those graces which distinguish polished society (10).

In other words, Ireland cannot inspire Horatio's interest because, for Horatio, Ireland is only interesting in terms of its ability to mimic England precisely or to do the opposite and be so different that it is disgusting to him. In this instance we see that Horatio's desires are at odds with themselves: Horatio simultaneously wants the Irish to be more civilized and, paradoxically, more barbaric.¹⁸ Thus the imperial gaze is rife with ambiguity—it simultaneously seeks to produce the other as a stable and fixed image of barbarity in order to allow the colonizer to see himself as “civilized” while also seeking to transform the other as a display of the colonizer's good will and imperial power. Each of these goals is mutually exclusive: to achieve one is, by necessity, to fail at the other. Just like the critics who praised Owenson for the creation of the national tale while damning her for the very tools she used, Horatio's desire for Ireland is contradictory: perpetually too barbaric to be properly civilized yet too civilized to be properly barbaric. However, because Horatio is English—and therefore the colonizer as opposed to the colonized—he cannot admit his own contradictory nature; he must see the contradictions as something essential to Ireland or admit to his own incoherence.

Horatio's contradictory desires are precisely what bring about his failures. For example, Horatio wishes to “capture” or “take” Glorvina, yet what attracts him to her in the first place is her wildness. Whenever Horatio succeeds in “taming” or “reforming”

Glorvina to match his “desires,” he ends up making her undesirable to him. The following description, where Horatio discusses his drawing-lessons with Glorvina, is emblematic of this very point:

[Glorvina] was created for a musician—there she is borne away by the magic of the art in which she excels, and the natural enthusiasm of her impassioned character: she can sigh, she can weep, she can smile, over her harp. The sensibility of her soul trembles in her song, and the expression of her rapt countenance harmonizes with her voice. But at her drawing-desk, her features lose their animated character—the smile of rapture ceases to play, and the glance of inspiration to beam. And with the transient extinction of those feelings from which each touching charm is derived, fades that all-pervading interest, that energy of admiration which she usually excites. (86)

Horatio’s attraction to Glorvina is summed up in her chosen artistic forms: music and dancing. For Horatio, Glorvina “was created for a musician” because music’s form allows her to animate her feelings and expressions through time. Unlike Horatio whose landscape paintings and sketches represent Ireland as “a framed landscape that presents an unchanging beauty, aesthetically isolated from history and progress,” Glorvina’s musical expressions are “founded in the oral tradition, inextricably bound to [Ireland’s] history, but also capable of change” (Jylkka 93). Glorvina’s art is ever-adapting and ever-changing; it cannot be frozen, tamed, or played the same way twice—it exists only during the performance. Horatio’s art, on the other hand, is static. Horatio’s problem, therefore, is that neither Glorvina nor Ireland can be expressed by this type of art. Horatio is not attracted to the static image of Glorvina but rather the actions which characterize her

performance: her weeping and smiling. Thus, when Horatio tries to represent, express, or understand Glorvina through his art he necessarily renders her static and therefore, to him, uninteresting. Thus, part of the struggle that Horatio faces is that his success and his failure are essentially equal: if he succeeds in taming her—rendering her static—then he no longer wants her. Yet, if he does not tame her then he persists in wanting but never attaining her.

Horatio's internalized imperial anxieties manifest in his dreams. While pondering his strange attraction to Glorvina, Horatio falls asleep and has what begins as a pleasant, and even latently sexual, dream. This dream, however, quickly turns into a nightmare: after dream-Glorvina approaches Horatio's bed and draws the curtains, she raises her veil revealing not her own face but, rather, "the face, the head, of a *Gorgon*" (*WIG* 60). In Greek mythology, a Gorgon is a terrible, monstrous woman with venomous snakes protruding from her skull; perhaps the most famous or recognizable example is Medusa. Significantly, Gorgons are famous and feared for their ability to petrify their victims, transforming them into statues that are permanently fixed in time and position. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Perseus uses a mirror to look upon Medusa in order to avoid being turned to stone; here, though, we see a role-reversed distortion of the myth. In reality, Horatio plays the role of the Gorgon, wishing to render Glorvina and Ireland static.

The full extent of the contradictory nature of Horatio's imperial gaze is revealed upon his wakening; for Horatio is also afraid of the gaze being ineffective. Thus, attempting to mask the entire imperial relationship by revealing it, Horatio responds to Glorvina's gaze by being paralyzed himself:

Awakened by the sudden and terrific motion it excited, though still almost

motionless [...] I cast my eyes through a fracture in the old damask drapery of my bed, and beheld—not the horrid spectre of my recent dream, but the form of a cherub hovering near my pillow—it was the Lady Glorvina herself! Oh! how I trembled lest the fair image should only be the vision of my slumber: I scarcely dared to breath, lest it should dissolve. (60)

How is it that Horatio can be excited into a “sudden and terrific motion” while remaining “still almost motionless”? The motion that Horatio feels, and reacts to with motionlessness, is Glorvina’s interruption of the imperial gaze’s power structure. In this moment, the gaze is a mutual exchange where Horatio experiences both the giving and the receiving of the gaze. His only choice in this moment is to be frozen. What terrifies Horatio is his complete and total surrender to the gaze. He isn’t afraid of Glorvina being an illusion that he crafts; he is entirely counting on it. He is motionless in fear that Glorvina is merely a vision; he fears that any motion will dissolve her. Horatio’s motionlessness, then, can be seen as an attempt to reinforce his own power—in order for his imperial, Medusa-like gaze to be effective, he must make himself subject to its effects. In order for him to believe his gaze will keep Glorvina from “dissolving,” he must remain completely motionless and fixed in time and space.

Despite many attempts Horatio continuously fails to represent Ireland. From the first moment that he gazes upon Glorvina, Horatio laments his inability to capture her in either words or image: “her attitude! her air! But how cold—how inanimate—how imperfect this description! Oh! could I but *seize* the touching features” (*WIG* 52-3). Horatio’s struggle exists in the fact that every attempt to render Glorvina static destroys the animated nature that makes her attractive to him in the first place. Still wishing to

maintain control, however, Horatio uses sketching as a means of establishing a sense of superiority over Inismore's inhabitants. In the following scene, Horatio sketches the castle and sets Glorvina up to fail by manipulating her into accepting an impossible task:

The drawing which I made of the castle is finished—the Prince is charmed with it, and Glorvina insisted on copying it. This was as I expected—as I wished; and I took care to finish it so minutely, that her patience (of which she has no great store), should soon be exhausted in the imitation, and I should have something more of her attention than she generally affords me at the drawing desk. (97)

Horatio's plan works nearly perfectly. Glorvina does, indeed, lose her focus on the drawing and offers the paper back to Horatio who is pleased to see an unfinished sketch of his face. What pleases Horatio here is that Glorvina fails in capturing his likeness whereas he is able to succeed, at least partially, in capturing hers. Unlike Horatio, however, Glorvina is not pleased in the slightest and her eyes remain fixed on Horatio's image of her, "as though she dreaded by their removal she should encounter those of the artist" (100). What horrifies Glorvina here is that Horatio has rendered her static and two dimensional by means of his own imperial gaze. Horatio writes, "That beautifully pensive expression which touches the countenance of Glorvina [...] I have most happily caught; and her costume, attitude, and harp, form as happy a combination of traits, as a single portrait perhaps ever presented" (101). By capturing Glorvina and condensing her various traits into a singular portrait, Horatio has essentially taken the animation which she considers as essential to the Irish character and rendered it static and inanimate. It comes as no surprise that the Prince, her father, is quite literally silenced when seeing this portrait.¹⁹

Ultimately, Horatio's setting Glorvina up to fail raises precisely the issue that Ireland, itself, was facing in the early 19th century. Throughout the novel we see Horatio continuously failing to represent Ireland yet still attempting to do so by producing physical artifacts that offer an interpretation of Ireland. Fictionally, the letters that Horatio sends are English reflections of Ireland to be gazed upon by a member of England's government; historically, the letters in *The Wild Irish Girl* are reflections of Ireland mediated through a fictional English eye to be consumed by the English reading public. Ultimately, just as the maps offered a static fiction of a homogenous Ireland defined by the English, Horatio's letters render Glorvina static. For the majority of the novel Horatio remains Glorvina's interlocutor and speaker—all that she says or does gets mediated through his writing. However, Owenson's massive quantity of footnotes can be read as an attempt to let Ireland speak for itself. As I highlighted towards the beginning of this chapter, Owenson's paratextual interruptions were the most commonly criticized aspects of Owenson's first national tale, yet they were also what served to mark *The Wild Irish Girl* as a national tale. This being the case, it is important to consider how paratext functions in this romance. In the following section, I will conclude by examining the ways in which Owenson uses paratext to counter Horatio's English gaze and, furthermore, to remap, reorganize and reclassify Ireland by claiming authority over Ireland's various representations.

Paratext: Letting Ireland Speak

Before examining the paratext of *The Wild Irish Girl*, I would like to draw attention to the conclusion of the novel. In this concluding chapter Owenson breaks from the epistolary form, abandoning Horatio's epistolary narration in favor of a disembodied

third-person narrator. It is in this scene and from this third person perspective that we see Horatio disrupt his father and Glorvina's wedding:

The last red beams of the evening sun shone through a stormy cloud on the votarists: all was awfully silent; a pause solemn and affecting ensued; then the priest *began* to celebrate the marriage rites; but the first words had not died on his lips when a figure, pale and ghastly, rushed forward, wildly exclaiming, 'Stop, I charge you, stop! you know not what you do! it is sacrilege!' and breathless and faint the seeming maniac sunk at the feet of the bride. (emphasis added, *WIG* 239)

Horatio's exclamation is important because it highlights the instability of Glorvina's double-role. Horatio interrupts the ceremony just as "the priest *began* to celebrate the marriage rites" and before "the first words had not died on his lips." Significantly, the grounds upon which Horatio opposes Glorvina's marriage are preemptive; legally speaking, the "sacrilege" that Horatio accuses them of has not yet occurred and will not occur directly in the act of union. Because Glorvina has not yet married Horatio's father, she is not yet his legal mother; rather, she is his *potential* legal mother. For the sacrilege of incest to take place, Horatio and Glorvina would have to commit an act of incest after the marriage (as it is—legally speaking—impossible for them to do so before this marriage).

If Glorvina is the embodiment of Irish culture, then this scene holds a special place in terms of the parallel union plots (the union of England and Ireland and the union of marriage). What this scene seems to say, then, is that a true union requires more than just the legal binding but rather a set of actions that allow for an actual union to take place. The fact that this union never takes place—either between Horatio and Glorvina or

between Glorvina and Horatio's father—suggests that the Union between Ireland and England, too, has not *actually* taken place. What has taken place is the creation of opposing potentials: Ireland, like Glorvina, holds a floating position between being attached to England through paternalistic care or through a supposedly equal marriage.

I call attention to this scene because it is the moment where Glorvina's floating status is most clear and therefore it is also the scene where the relationship between Glorvina and Owenson's paratext is most apparent. Gérard Genette's definition of paratext is quite useful for understanding this point; for Genette, a paratext is "a threshold" or "an 'undefined zone' between the inside and the outside, a zone without any hard and fast boundary on either the inward side (turned toward the text) or the outward side (turned toward the world's discourse about the text)" (Genette 2). Like Glorvina's floating position, paratext occupies a position between the text and the world the text exists in—never fully occupying either. Because of the novel's epistolary form, the primary speaker in Owenson's first national tale is the ostensibly English protagonist, Horatio. Glorvina, Father John, the Prince of Inismore, and the rest of the novel's small cast, all get mediated through Horatio's letters to his friend in English Parliament. However, the same cannot be said of Sydney Owenson, who very much includes herself within the novel's paratext. This is clear as early as the first footnote which is used to authorize Horatio's description of the mail-boat to Dublin. The footnote reads, "This little marine sketch is by no means a fancy picture; it was actually copied from the life, in the summer of 1805" (*WIG* 14n1). In this footnote Owenson does not cite an outside source or piece of antiquity—she cites herself and this is her voice acting as the authorizing force of Horatio's language. To the reader—especially the English reader—the accuracy

of Horatio's description is not relegated to the essentialist assumption of English rationality, but rather the accuracy is legitimated on the authority of Owenson's own Irish experience. By granting herself the power to authenticate Horatio's comments with her own experiences of Ireland, Owenson seizes hold of the classifying power the English used to define Ireland.²⁰

Owenson similarly claims authority over Ireland's authenticity in her footnotes when she cites antiquarian sources, including the English antiquarians such as Vallancey and Arthur Young. For example, the third footnote, which authenticates the national congeniality of the Irish, does not use Owenson's voice whatsoever. As Horatio arrives in Dublin he notices that "even amongst the first class, there is a warmth and cordiality of address, which, though perhaps not more sincere than the cold formality of British ceremony, is certainly more fascinating" (16). To this, Owenson adds a footnote that quotes the English agriculturalist and writer, Arthur Young: "Every unprejudiced traveler who visits them (the Irish), will be as much pleased with their cheerfulness as obliged by their hospitality; and will find them a brave, polite, and liberal people" (qtd. in *WIG* 16n1). While it may be tempting to wonder if using an English text to authenticate Horatio actually effaces Owenson's voice by reinforcing English definitions, descriptions, and explanations of Ireland, precisely the opposite has taken place. Here, Owenson is still relying upon her own authority as this footnote is still legitimating her perspective. As Genette asserts, paratext is "always the conveyor of a commentary that is authorial or more or less legitimated by the author [...] [and] is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it" (Genette 2).²¹ Paratext, especially when written by the original author, is always a purposeful choice; it is always

a choice which attempts to manipulate the reception of the text. Here, Owenson's careful tactics allow her to claim authority over English representations of Ireland. Just like her choice of an English protagonist, Owenson tactically chooses the English texts that can authenticate her narrative. Owenson is actually acting as an authority—an arbiter of sorts—in determining which English texts should be considered relevant for understanding the Irish.

By the end of the novel, Owenson's paratext quite literally begins to overtake Horatio's narration of his English experience in Ireland. While travelling with Father John and stopping to visit a bard known as "the *mon wi the twa heads*,"²² Horatio is interrupted mid-sentence to make room for a footnote that goes on for two and a half pages (emphasis in original, *WIG* 199-202n1). This note's primary contents are a letter that Owenson received from Reverend George Vaughan Sampson describing, in detail, his own encounter with this bard. Compared to Reverend Sampson's letter which takes up the majority of Owenson's massive footnote, Horatio offers the reader next to nothing about this encounter other than a brief and inadequate description of his appearance and mannerisms. Significantly, Owenson uses a letter from Rev. G.V. Sampson, the Irish surveyor responsible for a statistical survey of Londonderry,²³ to trump and overpower Horatio's letter—covering two and a half pages of text before Horatio is allowed to finish his sentence. Here, more clearly than anywhere else in the novel, we see Owenson counter-mapping against the English by allowing Irish representations of Ireland to hold a privileged position while, again—quite literally—overtaking Horatio's text.

Sydney Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* is a historically curious artifact that, despite the renewed attention it has received over the last twenty years, is and was too

quickly defined in terms of failure. As a result, critics of the novel have ignored the complex ways in which Owenson responds to English surveys of Ireland. Owenson uses Horatio to exemplify England's imperial gaze; Horatio's consistent failures to capture or even adequately describe Ireland (or Glorvina) reveal Owenson's subtle critique of the limits of England's imperial gaze. Owenson's footnotes offer a counter-mapping strategy that privileges her Irish experience over that of the English. As Genette writes, "Whether original, later, or delayed, the authorial annotation of a text [...] by dint of its discursive nature, unavoidably marks a break in the enunciative regime" (332). Owenson's footnotes in *The Wild Irish Girl*, which only occur in Horatio's letters, are breaks in England's enunciative regime. By privileging her own Irish experience over that of the English, and by choosing which texts best authorize and authenticate her view of Ireland, Owenson's first national tale attempts to steal back England's power over Ireland, remapping Ireland's poetic space.

Notes

¹ Thomas Flanagan sums up this point quite well in *The Irish Novelists, 1800-1850*: "*The Wild Irish Girl* is a bad book. But it is one of those oddities of literature which, regardless of merit, are deeply influential" (119).

² All future citations of *The Wild Irish Girl* shall be abbreviated as *WIG*. Likewise, future citations of Owenson's *The Life and Times of Salvator Rosa* shall be shortened to *Salvator*.

³ Bridget Matthews-Kane also makes reference to the predatorial language Horatio relies upon while discussing his artistic intentions: "The pursuit of art, a supposedly neutral field of knowledge, provides an excuse for his intrusive information

gathering, and the rapacious connotation of his words connects the ability to capture the landscape in art with the physical capture of the land” (11). For Matthews-Kane, Horatio’s desire to capture Ireland reveals his feeling that Ireland is somehow inaccessible; his art therefore serves as a means of trying to connect him to Ireland.

⁴ All of these failures only became apparent to me after reading Katja Jylkka’s “Ut Pictura Poesis? Art and the Irish Nation in *The Wild Irish Girl*.” Jylkka writes, “Glorvina never learns to draw, and Horatio continues to express sentiments in visual, picturesque terms—suggesting that their respective versions of Ireland remain fundamentally incompatible” (91). Significantly, Jylkka mobilizes these failures to show that Horatio comes to realize “that his visual mode of interpreting Ireland appears to have been wrong or inadequate” (92).

⁵ Thomas Flanagan outlines *The Wild Irish Girl*’s ending as follows: “Inismore dies, *Glorvina* and [Horatio] *marry*, and the young man vows to make Ireland, as much as England, his home” (emphasis added, Flanagan 121). Joep Leerssen, while describing the plot of *The Wild Irish Girl*, asserts that the narrative moves “through the meanderings of improbable incident and extensive descriptions of local colour, *towards a happy marriage*” (emphasis added, Leerssen 41). Although Leerssen’s use of the word “towards” suggests the potentiality of Glorvina and Horatio’s marriage, later statements make it clear that Leerssen is asserting a marriage by the end of the narrative: “But when Morgan consecrates a marriage between the two traditions in the persons of Horatio and Glorvina [...] English language discourse can begin to identify with that exotic culture” (67). Like Leerssen, Melissa Fegan also suggests that *The Wild Irish Girl*’s plot “moves [...] *towards the marriage* of the English stranger and the Irish princess,” yet shortly after

confirms the marriage (emphasis added, Fegan 40). Significantly, however, Fegan's suggestion is that "there are too many disturbing questions remaining for [Glorvina and Horatio's marriage] to function as a soothing allegory of the Union" (40). Many other such examples surely exist as well.

Despite the insistence of many critics, *The Wild Irish Girl* does not end with a marriage. The last section of the novel is a letter to Horatio from his father; in this letter Horatio is informed that his previous bride-to-be has fled and eloped "with a more ardent lover," consequently leaving Horatio's "hand as free as [his] heart towards her ever was" (*WIG* 249-50). The fact that Horatio must be informed that he is free to marry Glorvina readily implies that Horatio has not, in fact, married Glorvina.

⁶ The sense that Ireland's national identity was somehow "incomplete" was a commonly understood point throughout the 19th century; as Seamus Deane asserts, "The belief that the Irish national character was degraded beyond the point of recovery was more likely to be found in the writings of English literary men, although the fear that this was the case is a pronounced feature of much Irish writing too" (98). For Deane, the perpetual degradation of the Irish national character was "the unchanging and unchangeable element in the Irish problem" as well as the driving force behind Ireland's passionate and effusive nationalism (100).

⁷ Significantly, in "Geography—a European Science," David Stoddart argues "that what distinguishes geography as an intellectual activity [...] is a set of attitudes, methods, techniques and questions, all of them developed in Europe towards the end of the eighteenth century" (Stoddart 290). At first glance Stoddart's claim rings of Eurocentrism; however, Derek Gregory argues that when Stoddart claims this, "what [he]

has in mind is the emergence of geography as a quintessentially *empirical science*" (Gregory 17).

⁸ The many surveys of Ireland have a long, detailed, and complex history. For information concerning the Ordnance Surveys in Ireland in the 19th century, see J.H. Andrews' *A Paper Landscape*; for a truly delightful, informative, yet broader discussion of the British map-making and surveying projects see Rachel Hewitt's *Map of a Nation*.

⁹ For more on General Charles Vallancey and his cartographic projects, see J.H. Andrews "Charles Vallancey and the Map of Ireland" and Clare O'Halloran's "An English Orientalist in Ireland: Charles Vallancey (1726-1812)." Additionally, a rendition of Vallancey's *Military Itinerary of South Ireland* along with a detailed biography and introduction is available in William O'Reilly's "Charles Vallancey and the *Military Itinerary* of Ireland."

¹⁰ All future references to *A Paper Landscape* shall be abbreviated to *APL*.

¹¹ This concept is best illustrated by a statement made by Lord Salisbury in 1883: "the most disagreeable part of the three kingdoms is Ireland, and therefore Ireland has a splendid map" (qtd. in Hewitt 241).

¹² Benedict Anderson asserts that "European-style maps worked on the basis of a totalizing classification, and led their bureaucratic producers and consumers towards policies with revolutionary consequences," leading to an increased alignment between maps and power (Anderson 173). In addition, Derek Gregory's *Geographical Imaginations* insightfully links the representation that geography and cartography provided to Foucault's understanding of how resemblance yielded to representation in the

seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, just as geography was emerging as an empirical science (Gregory 21).

¹³ M.H. Edney rightly suggests that as cartography was militarized, so too was the military subject to cartography, leading to an “increase in the ‘map-mindedness’ of senior army officers” (Edney 14). However, the spread of “map-mindedness” was not confined to the military. In many cases maps, like books, had to be separated into different volumes and editions to accommodate sales and demand (see Hewitt 36). Likewise, direct references to maps, geography, and cartography throughout 18th and 19th century popular culture further suggest that the map-mindedness which Edney describes was spread throughout the public.

¹⁴ Thongchai Winichakul’s discussion of “the two-way identification of nationhood” is quite useful for understanding this point. According to Thongchai, “The discourse of a modern nation usually presupposes this two-way identification: positively by some common nature, identity, or interests; negatively by the differences with other nations” (3).

¹⁵ Graham Huggan notes a discrepancy between the authoritative status of maps and their approximative function, “a discrepancy which marks out the ‘recognizable totality’ of the map as a manifestation of the desire for control rather than as an authenticating seal of coherence” (117). Thus the coherence or “uniformity” present within a map’s representation is more “the subject of a proposition than a statement of fact” (117). See Huggan’s “Decolonizing the Map,” especially 115-119.

¹⁶ Although he is likely being metaphorical, Said’s claim becomes quite literal in the following quotation when one considers it in terms of mapping:

The Orientalist *surveys* the Orient *from above*, with the aim of getting hold of the whole sprawling panorama before him—culture, religion, mind, history, society. To do this *he must see every detail through the device of a set of reductive categories* [...] any vision of the Orient ultimately comes to rely for its coherence and force on the person, institution, or discourse whose property it is” (emphasis added, Said 239).

It is instructive that Said imagines the Orientalist *surveying* from *above*, seeing the Orient as though it is laid down on a map below him; this map *reduces* categories by asserting homogenous, continuous, and coherent identities for entire groups of people.

¹⁷ For this point I am indebted to a quote from Nigel Leask’s “Wandering through Eblis.” Discussing Linnaean taxonomies as forms of epistemological violence, Leask writes, “ethnographic representations of the period frequently empty landscapes of indigenous inhabitants [...] or else typify their cultural attributes as fixed essences frozen in a primordial antiquity” (167).

¹⁸ In her introduction to *The Wild Irish Girl*, Kathryn Kirkpatrick also refers to this passage and states, “Horatio reveals that the process of colonization, of transforming the other into the image of the self, destroys the other’s usefulness as an object of tourism” (*WIG* xv-xvi).

¹⁹ Owenson writes:

When it was shewn to the Prince, he gazed on it in silence, till tears obscured his glance; then, laying it down, he embraced me, but said nothing. Had he detailed the merits and demerits of the picture in all the technical farrago of *cognoscenti*

phrase, his comments would not have been half so eloquent as this simple action, and the silence which accompanied it. (Owenson, *WIG* 101).

Here, Owenson shows the power of visual art; the Prince is literally brought to silent tears as he looks upon the frozen image of his daughter.

²⁰ In *Irish Orientalism* Joseph Lennon notes that Owenson's footnotes reinforce Horatio's representation of Ireland with antiquarianism. For Lennon, Owenson's "network of references [...] sustains the plausibility of [Ireland's] Oriental origins [...] [and] correlate actions in the present to antiquity with the goal of distinguishing Irish culture" (Lennon 144-45).

²¹ It is of note that Genette adds, parenthetically, that this "more pertinent" reading is a subjective point which is "more pertinent, of course, in the eyes of the author and his allies" (2).

²² The "*mon wi the twa heads*" refers to Denis Hampson; the second head refers to a large lump on the back of his neck (*WIG* 199, 266).

²³ Rev. G.V. Sampson was the Irish surveyor who composed a statistical survey of Londonderry in Ireland. See Sampson's *Statistical Survey of the County of Londonderry*.

Chapter 2: “No Other English Word”: The Creation of Cultural Coherence in Jane

Austen’s *Emma*

In his review of Jane Austen’s *Emma*, Lionel Trilling famously remarked that when Emma looks down upon the gentleman-farmer, Mr. Martin, and prevents his marriage with Harriet Smith, Emma makes “a mistake of nothing less than national import” (53). According to Trilling, Emma’s mistake is in failing to understand how her society’s class structure reproduces itself. Although Emma’s attempts to match Harriet with Mr. Elton and then with Frank Churchill may appear to be innocent fun, by the end of the novel Emma learns that poorly made matches can be truly disastrous. Fearing that Mr. Knightley is in love with Harriet, Emma envisions the destruction of her community: Mr. and Mrs. Westons’ soon-to-be-born child will eventually take up all of their time, Jane Fairfax and Frank Churchill will soon move to Enscombe—likely taking Mrs. and Miss Bates with them—and if Mr. Knightley chooses to marry Harriet then it is unlikely that he will be able to visit Hartfield as regularly—let alone help Mr. Woodhouse manage Hartfield.¹ Emma Woodhouse’s careless matchmaking—as well as her match-breaking—has the potential to leave her in an even deeper state of mental isolation than she experienced at the beginning of the novel. Innocuous as it may seem, Emma’s desire to arrange others’ lives gains national import in that it threatens the production of social order in Highbury.²

I call attention to the “national import” of Emma’s mistakes because, until recent years, critics of Austen’s novels have seemingly made a mistake of similar national importance. Although Trilling acknowledges the “national feeling” in *Emma* and counters Arnold Hauser’s claim that Austen never problematizes social realities, he does

so with trepidation.³ Despite claiming that “there appears in *Emma* a tendency to conceive of a specifically English ideal of life,” Trilling suggests that the novel is only “touched [...] lightly [...] by national feeling” (53). For Trilling, the England which Jane Austen depicts in *Emma* is an idyllic vision—easily countered by any “serious history”—which “[a]ll too often [...] is confused with the actual England” (59). It is not that Trilling is incorrect in asserting that “Jane Austen’s England” is not “the Real England.” Rather, his mistake is in denying the importance of Austen’s imaginary England. This mistake entirely relegates Jane Austen and her novels to a passive role, disconnected from the time, space, and culture in which she lived and wrote. It focuses entirely on the ways Jane Austen was “touched,” albeit “lightly,” by national feeling at the expense of the ways Austen touched national feeling.⁴

This chapter shall act as a corrective to these views by reading *Emma* as a kind of national tale in an attempt to reinstitute Jane Austen—as well as her works—as an active participant in the formation of Englishness.⁵ Although I contend that Austen mobilizes Emma’s mistakes of “national import” for didactic purposes, it is not my aim to produce a reading that further fetishizes “the spectacle of a Girl Being Taught a Lesson.”⁶ Such readings are oversimplified. Usually focused on only one character—or only one relationship—they ignore the complex and ubiquitous “noise” which establishes the cultural encounter necessary for the enunciation of national identity within Austen’s localized English settings.⁷ Whereas earlier national tales, such as *The Wild Irish Girl*, display their cultural encounter clearly and mobilize this encounter to pronounce a national identity in response to forms of colonization, the hyper-localized setting in *Emma* does not allow for a similar, clear-cut encounter. Thus to read *Emma* as a national

tale is necessarily to question the generic limits and boundaries of the national tale and therefore to further elucidate Austen's contributions to both nationalism and the formation of a composite Englishness.

In this chapter I shall argue that Austen's *Emma* does allow for cultural encounter—albeit in a very different way from previous national tales. In my first section I review the varying definitions of the national tale, focusing mainly upon the works of Katie Trumpener, Ina Ferris, and Miranda J. Burgess. Here, I outline the ways in which national tales contrast separate cultural worlds in order to dislodge the implied English reader and enunciate a distinct national identity. In addition, I outline the objections raised against placing Austen's works within the generic realm of the national tale. In the following section I expand upon Ferris's and Trumpener's definitions by showing how Austen's use of the gothic in *Northanger Abbey* dislodges readers from English space by thrusting them into Catherine's gothic imagination; once nestled into Catherine's imagined gothic world, the reader is dislodged yet again when Henry Tilney (Catherine's love interest) thrusts her back into the realm of England. In my third section, I shall show how *Emma* performs a similar kind of dislodging. Although *Emma* performs the functions of a national tale, it simultaneously parodies and disrupts the genre with its thorough Englishness. That is, unlike previous national tales, *Emma* firmly situates the reader not in Ireland or Scotland, but in Highbury, a small village in England just sixteen miles off from London. As opposed to a clear-cut cultural encounter brought about by travelling to a foreign space, *Emma* focuses on internal encounters between competing forms of Englishness. The drama of the novel stems from Emma's spoiled and desultory upbringing which does not allow her to discern or effectively judge these differing forms

of national identity. Despite *Emma*'s didactic themes, however, neither *Emma*'s narrator nor Emma offer a complete and unambiguous ruling on what Englishness means. These different brands of Englishness coexist within Highbury's hyper-localized setting revealing that, for Austen, Englishness is not a set and static subject. Rather than ruling upon any sort of "true" Englishness—and only ruling on a few "true" yet ambiguous qualities of Englishness—Austen's national tale reveals Englishness as a process: the process of reading, discerning, and evaluating the varying modes of being English. In my fourth and final section, I expand upon the implications of Austen's national tale, revealing how Austen aligns nationality with good conduct, thereby treating nationality as a kind of performance.

Defining and Excluding Austen from the National Tale

The national tale is difficult to define; in fact, the elusiveness of its definition seems to be a crucial aspect of its definition in the first place. As Katie Trumpener explains in *Bardic Nationalism*, the national tale "is a genre developed initially by female authors, who from the outset address questions of cultural distinctiveness, national policy, and political separatism" through a plot that takes pains to display "the contrast, attraction, and union of disparate cultural worlds" (132, 141). Through cultural encounter, the national tale creates a dialogue between two particular cultural identities in order to enunciate the native's homeland identity as well as their nation's relationship with the world around it. In other words the national tale is not unlike an autoethnography which, according to Ina Ferris, "derives its authority from the impurity or hybridity of its site of enunciation" because it speaks "from the peripheries" yet still "engages the language of the metropolis" ("Narrating Cultural Encounter" 291).⁸ As we

saw in the previous chapter, *The Wild Irish Girl*'s elaborate paratext was fundamental to its nationalistic purpose: by using a combination of personal and familial anecdotes, antiquarian studies, and the products of English surveillance, *The Wild Irish Girl*'s paratext emerges as a counter-mapping strategy to enunciate a distinct Irish identity. In short, when Owenson borrows from travel writers, surveyors, and antiquarians, she engages in the language of the metropolis (English) in order to express her national identity (Irish). Thus, hybridized from the start, the national tale eludes categorization.⁹

Jane Austen's novels are often considered in terms of localism and are thus excluded from the generic categories of her contemporaries, such as Sir Walter Scott's historical novels and Sydney Owenson's national tales. There is little doubt that Austen kept local concerns in mind. Austen preferred to write narratives that remained within the grasp of her everyday knowledge; evading the "danger of giving false representations," Austen's novels remain "quite at home" and domestic in nature (Austen, *Letters* 280). Although Trumpener acknowledges that *Mansfield Park* "invokes a nationalist rhetoric of cultural difference," she argues that Austen does this "in order to establish her own localist agenda," which does not involve "exoticizing national difference" but, rather, "draw[ing] on the nationalist analysis of cultural condescension to set up the terms of her own critique and to suggest that Mary Crawford's London attitudes are a kind of imperialism" (*Bardic Nationalism* 18). According to Trumpener, Austen's works lack two important qualities of the national tale. Firstly, there is a problem in function. National tales involve a process of exoticism; the national tale typically exoticizes the native's homeland in order to represent, enunciate, and create their own cultural distinctiveness.¹⁰ Austen's novels, for Trumpener, are too concerned with "female

socialization, domestic dynamics, and the morality of the novel” to allow for the auto-exoticization that characterizes the national tale (132). Secondly, there is a problem of travel and space. National tales involve a geographical movement between separate spaces; the national tale’s typical marriage plot represents the protagonist making a choice about these adjacent worlds.¹¹ Austen’s novels involve some travel but there isn’t quite the topographical choice that marks Trumpener’s definition. Although some of Austen’s characters get relocated or fear the potential of relocation—such as Fanny Price in *Mansfield Park* and Jane Fairfax in *Emma*—the narration never “dislodges” the reader from the comfort and safety of English space.¹²

Austen’s exclusion from the national tale has not been universal. Miranda J. Burgess, for example, holds to Ferris’s and Trumpener’s definition of the national tale yet rejects their limited geography for the national tale.¹³ In *British Fiction and the Production of Social Order*, Burgess, like myself, argues that Austen’s “works stretch the borders of the genre Owenson named ‘the national tale’” (154). Reading *Northanger Abbey* as an early kind of national tale, Burgess sees a Burkean influence that allowed Austen to rewrite the national tale as “a conservative genre of resistance to radical discourse, portrayed as ‘foreign’ corruption of natural, native English romance” (154-55). In the section that follows I, too, shall read *Northanger Abbey* as a prototype of the national tale that doubly dislodges the English reader.

Dislodging Gothic Settings in *Northanger Abbey*

As stated above, Austen’s novels do not contain the kind of travel typical to the national tale which is meant to dislodge English readers from their sense of place. But perhaps there is a *different* kind of dislodging that is more in tune with Austen’s

ambivalently satiric style. Specifically, what I have in mind is something like the way Austen “dislodges” the reader from English and gothic settings in *Northanger Abbey*. Throughout *Northanger Abbey*, Austen maintains an ambivalent relationship to Gothic novels.¹⁴ Catherine Morland, the novel’s naïve protagonist, struggles with her inability to fully discern the tropes of fiction from the tropes of reality. While it is obvious that Catherine’s penchant for reading gothic novels influences her misreadings, it is important to note that Catherine seems more apt to misread settings than people. General Tilney, whom Catherine will eventually mistake for a gothic villain, makes his first appearance in volume one of the novel, while Catherine is still in Bath. While in Bath, General Tilney is described fondly; when Catherine first gazes upon him in the tenth chapter, she thinks that he is “a very handsome man, of a commanding aspect, past the bloom, but not past the vigour of life” (Austen, *NA* 77).¹⁵ It is not until Catherine arrives at Northanger Abbey that her opinion of the General darkens and she begins to take notice of the way that the General “though so charming a man, seemed always a check upon his children’s spirits” (148). Suddenly, Catherine begins to notice his sullen mannerisms, which she embarrassingly takes as evidence for murder.

The setting has quite a lot to do with Catherine’s misreadings of General Tilney; in fact, her misreading of the General is a second-order misreading. The first-order misreading is of setting. When Catherine first learns of her invitation to the Tilney estate, Northanger Abbey, she is elated and begins to imaginatively author her own gothic novel, casting herself as the protagonist. Despite Eleanor’s contrary descriptions, Catherine is unable to “subdue the hope of some traditional legends, some awful memorials of an

injured or ill-fated nun” and imagines “long, damp passages [...] narrow cells [...] [and a] ruined chapel [...] within her daily reach” (134). In fact, Catherine is:

more assured than before, of Northanger Abbey having been a richly endowed convent at the time of the Reformation, of its having fallen into the hands of an ancestor of the Tilneys on its dissolution, of a large portion of the ancient building still making a part of the present dwelling although the rest was decayed, or of its standing low in a valley, sheltered from the north and east by rising woods of oak. (134)

Mentally re-writing Northanger Abbey as a gothic castle, not unlike those found in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Catherine’s confirmation bias causes her to ignore and excuse anything that contradicts her first mental image of the Abbey.¹⁶ And as Catherine writes herself into a gothic novel of her own imagination, she properly casts her friends as characters; embarrassingly casting General Tilney as a villain who has murdered his own wife, Henry and Eleanor’s mother.

Once Henry Tilney learns of Catherine’s suspicions, he dislodges her imagined gothic-space by reminding her of her home country:

Dear Miss Morland, consider the dreadful nature of the suspicions you have entertained. What have you been judging from? Remember the country and the age in which we live. Remember that we are English, that we are Christians. Consult your own understanding, your own sense of the probable, your own observation of what is passing around you. Does our education prepare us for such atrocities? Do our laws connive at them? Could they be perpetrated without being known, in a country like this, where social and literary intercourse is on

such a footing, where every man is surrounded by a neighbourhood of voluntary spies, and where roads and newspapers lay everything open? Dearest Miss Morland, what ideas have you been admitting? (186)

Here, Henry's speech mimics the definitions and causes of Englishness that Edmund Burke laid out in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. In *Reflections*, Burke asserts that the English pay respect to God, kings, parliaments, priests, and nobility "Because when such ideas are brought before our minds, it is *natural* to be so affected; because all other feelings are false and spurious, and tend to corrupt our minds, to vitiate our primary morals, to render us unfit for rational liberty" (emphasis in original, Burke 85). Throughout the reflections, Burke cites his fear of foreign influence, often relying on metaphors and similes dealing with disease and infection.¹⁷ Thus, when Henry asks Catherine "What ideas have you been admitting?" he is pointing towards her "contamination" from gothic novels which causes her to "corrupt" her setting; the corrupted setting, in turn, influences her false readings of General Tilney. Thus, when Henry reminds Catherine to "Remember that we are English," he is asking her to reconfigure her sense of place; in short, by reminding Catherine that she is English, Henry reminds her of the standards by which she should judge people.

Once Henry Tilney has dislodged Catherine from her imagined gothic setting, she comes to the conclusion that the murder she imagined could never happen in England. She acknowledges that England does have individuals who are less than desirable, but none that could be *that* evil; Henry's speech causes Catherine to relegate the Gothic to the outside of England. Catherine, instead, locates the gothic as something *other*, found in *other places*:

Charming as were all Mrs. Radcliffe's works [...] it was not in them perhaps that human nature, at least in the Midland counties of England, was to be looked for. Of the Alps and Pyrenees, with their pine forests and their vices, they might give a faithful delineation; and Italy, Switzerland, and the south of France might be as fruitful in horrors as they were there represented. Catherine dared not doubt beyond her own country, and even of that, if hard pressed, would have yielded the northern and western extremities. But in the central part of England there was surely some security [...] in the laws of the land, and the manners of the age [...] Among the Alps and Pyrenees, perhaps, there were no mixed characters. There, such as were not as spotless as an angel might have the dispositions of a fiend. But in England it was not so; among the English, she believed, in their hearts and habits, there was a general though unequal mixture of good and bad. (Austen, *NA* 188)

Now firmly grounded in the realm of England, uncorrupted by the gothic elements of *other nations*, Catherine begins to take a realist perspective of the world; it isn't that the English are spotless, but rather, that the English are reserved. The English may occasionally be wicked, but—to borrow a phrase from Clair Lamont—"an Englishman would not be wicked *enough* to commit the murder [Catherine] had attributed to the General" (Lamont 311). Thus, Catherine has, like Henry, adopted a Burkean sense of Englishness: the English are certainly capable of evil, but their "natural" reserve and conservatism prevents them from going astray, so long as they can resist foreign corruption.

Thus, as early as *Northanger Abbey*, we see Austen's tactics for dislodging her readers' sense of space.¹⁸ Catherine's gothic-infused imagination corrupts her understanding of English space. The gothic, in fact, becomes Catherine's new center that gets dislodged when Henry reminds her of her own nation. In the following section I similarly read *Emma*, arguing that Austen performs the functions of a national tale in a thoroughly English space. As in *Northanger Abbey*, Austen's *Emma* doesn't define the English in terms of their perfection but, rather, in terms of their mixture of good and evil, seriousness and silliness.

***Emma*: a Response to and Dislodging of the National Tale**

Jane Austen's *Emma* incorporates many of the functions of the national tale while refusing to exist within the genre's prescribed space (Ireland and Scotland). Although its definition is notoriously "slippery," for the purposes of my argument it is useful to keep in mind four qualities of the national tale: (1) the national tale enunciates a national identity that exists amongst other national identities; (2) the national tale involves a cultural encounter between members of disparate national cultures; (3) this cultural encounter occurs between members of the periphery who write *to* the metropolis; (4) the national tale is hybrid in nature because it is written from the periphery yet uses the language of the metropolis to enunciate its distinct cultural identity.¹⁹

On a superficial level, *Emma* seemingly declares a coherent English identity through Mr. Knightley, whom many have taken to be the novel's English gentleman *par excellence*.²⁰ Throughout the novel Mr. Knightley displays his Englishness: his estate, with its "English verdure, English culture, [and] English comfort," materially represents Englishness three times over (Austen, *E* 327); he speaks in "plain, unaffected,

gentlemanlike English,” (405-6); and, when he greets his brother, Mr. John Knightley, he does so “in the true English style, burying under a calmness that seemed all but indifference, the real attachment which would have led either of them, if requisite, to do everything for the good of the other” (89). At first glance, the novel’s Englishness seems to revolve entirely around Mr. George Knightley. In fact, the word “English” only occurs eight times within the novel—and over half of those occurrences describe Mr. Knightley and his estate.²¹

But merely proclaiming an English identity is not enough to draw *Emma* into the genre of the national tale; based on this scene alone, *Emma* is missing the cultural encounter between disparate identities that allows the enunciation of a necessarily hybrid identity. Although it seems as though Austen is offering a definition of Englishness when she describes the Knightley brothers’ greeting, it is easy to miss the slippery vagueness of the definition. If Englishness involves “burying [...] real attachment” “under a calmness that seemed all but indifference” then there is a necessary tautology to her definition (89). Without knowing the Knightley brothers it would be all but impossible to see their passionate good will for one another hidden underneath their stereotypically English reserve; that is, to understand their greeting it is necessary to have a preexisting understanding of their relationship. In the same way, in order to understand that their greeting is “in the true English style” it is necessary to have an *a priori* understanding of Englishness; that is, Englishness can only be recognizable to those who already understand Englishness. Thus neither Mr. Knightley nor his brother can, by themselves, be used to offer a secure English identity: in order for the Knightley brothers’ greeting to be performed in the “true English style” it is necessary that there be a third party who

allows for comparison. This is why Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax are so very integral to *Emma*'s narrative; they not only remind the reader of the world outside of Highbury, but also the fact that each is nearly expatriated but in different ways reminds the reader of the world outside of England.²²

Frank Churchill, in particular, allows Austen to depict the limits of Mr. Knightley's Englishness. Although Mr. Knightley seems to be the perfect incarnation of Englishness itself, there are a few subtle and brief moments where his reserve—his “seeming indifference”—fails to mask his real attachment.²³ One such moment occurs in the final chapter of the first volume, after Frank Churchill fails to arrive in Highbury. After witnessing Emma defend Frank Churchill—and being inadvertently tormented by Emma describing her excitement at having “the pleasure of looking at some body new” (130)—Mr. Knightley struggles to maintain composure. Eventually he fails; Mr. Knightley loses his reserve and snaps. Despite having never met Frank Churchill, Mr. Knightley attacks his nationality, his intelligence, his morals, and his masculinity. Mr. Knightley asserts that Frank Churchill “can be amiable only in French,” that “he can have no English delicacy towards the feelings of other people,” and he calls Frank a “coxcomb,” “the most insufferable fellow breathing,” and a “puppy” (133-34). This scene, which ends the first volume of *Emma*, depicts Mr. Knightley at his worst and Emma is entirely right in calling him prejudiced. The irony is that Emma cannot see *why* Knightley is prejudiced. Austen does not wish the reader to take Mr. Knightley's assertions as truth—she wants the reader to see Mr. Knightley being prejudiced, particularly against Frank Churchill. This has two functions: it foreshadows Mr. Knightley's attraction to Emma and, closer to my point, it hints at Frank Churchill's

status as an outsider.

Frank Churchill's desire to be part of Highbury's community ironically highlights his "outsider" status. Xenophobic as Mr. Knightley's comments may be, they are not entirely inaccurate; Frank Churchill does not fit seamlessly into Highbury's community. This is exemplified early in the second volume when Frank overeagerly praises everything about Highbury and its community, wishing "to be made acquainted with the whole village" (179). Although Emma notices that Frank finds "interest" in Highbury "much oftener than [she] could have supposed," she still does not suspect anything: "it could not be fairly supposed that he had been ever voluntarily absenting himself; that he had not been acting a part, or making a parade of insincere professions" (179). The irony is, of course, that Frank *has* been voluntarily absenting himself and that he is, indeed, acting a part and making an insincere parade to cover up his relationship with Jane Fairfax. To assist in his illusion he even allows Emma to lightly mock Jane Fairfax; however, when questioned about how well he knew Jane Fairfax, Frank Churchill quickly changes the subject back to his overeager praise of Highbury:

Ha! this must be the very shop that every body attends every day of their lives
[...] pray let us go in, that I may prove myself to belong to the place, to be a true
citizen of Highbury. I must buy something at Ford's. It will be taking out my
freedom. (181)

Here, Frank Churchill expresses his desire to purchase his citizenship at Ford's, a general store for Highbury's small community. Although Emma is, apparently, taken by his "patriotism," Frank Churchill's subsequent use of the word "*amor patriae*" exoticizes him by revealing his metropolitan education.

Jane Fairfax, Frank Churchill's secret fiancée, also maintains a position as an outsider. Jane Fairfax is one of Austen's most impenetrable characters; even the characters within *Emma* note her quiet demeanor. This is especially true of Emma who is quick to denounce Jane Fairfax for her reserve. While interrogating Jane Fairfax on her knowledge of Frank Churchill, Emma asks, "Was he handsome?" to which Jane Fairfax replies, "She believed he was reckoned a very fine young man" (152). What is striking about this scene is that Jane's responses indicate that she is not actually the speaker; why would Jane refer to herself with a third-person pronoun? Here, Jane Fairfax's line reads as though it was being repeated to someone else—indeed, one can almost imagine Emma sitting with Harriet and mimicking Jane's responses in a mocking voice, falling in and out of first and third person. Using free indirect speech, Austen gives readers a sense of the conversation yet transposes it as part of Highbury's active gossip mill—that is, Austen keeps the reader removed not only from Jane Fairfax's mind but even her dialogue.²⁴

The cultural encounter within *Emma* is markedly different from other national tales in that it occurs between different brands of Englishness. After Frank Churchill reveals his secret engagement with Jane Fairfax, Emma and the rest of Highbury are astonished and offended—yet they are all quick to include him in Highbury society once again. Although she is sure that Frank Churchill "had been wrong," Emma still empathizes with his suffering and admits that "could he have entered the room, she must have shaken hands with him as heartily as ever" (402). Even Mr. Knightley, Frank Churchill's harshest critic, believes that Frank's "character will improve, and acquire from [Jane] the steadiness and delicacy of principle that it wants" (405). Together, Jane

Fairfax and Frank Churchill make up *Emma*'s hidden story—unavailable to the reader until the very end, and even then remaining elusive. In addition, their relationship also exists within the periphery of Highbury's English society. In Highbury's community both are outsiders: Jane Fairfax, although born in Highbury, was raised elsewhere by the Campbell family, outside of Highbury. Frank Churchill, like Jane Fairfax, was born in Highbury but—again, like Jane Fairfax—was rescued from immediate poverty at a young age and raised elsewhere.²⁵ Together, in their secret relationship, they are also operating outside of English courtship practices. Unlike traditional courtships which occur in the open and within the public, the postal service allows Frank and Jane to keep their relationship hidden.²⁶ With both characters working outside of England's cultural rules, it is hardly surprising that both are at risk of expatriation. For Jane Fairfax the choice is not altogether up to her—she may be doomed to “retire from all the pleasures of life, of rational intercourse, equal society, peace and hope, to penance and mortification for ever” as a governess (149). Likewise, Frank Churchill's secret romance causes him to grow “sick of England” and wish to “leave it tomorrow, if [he] could” (331). By keeping their relationship a secret, Frank and Jane do not contribute to the noise that holds the community together and allows for Englishness. Yet Austen allows both characters to remain in England and even within Englishness as soon as they openly share their relationship with their community.

Despite the existence of differing brands of Englishness, Austen still depicts an overall coherence to Englishness. Unlike Mr. Knightley, who speaks “plain, unaffected, gentleman-like English [...] even to the woman he was in love with” (405-6), Frank Churchill speaks extravagantly and without reserve. Flirting with Emma on Box Hill,

Frank Churchill is “talkative and gay,” paying “every distinguishing attention that could be paid” to Emma for all—including Jane Fairfax—to see. Observing his total lack of English reserve, Emma thinks to herself:

[I]n the judgement of most people looking on it must have had such an appearance as no English word but flirtation could very well describe. “Mr. Frank Churchill and Miss Woodhouse flirted together excessively.” They were laying themselves open to that very phrase—and to having it sent off in a letter to Maple Grove by one lady [Mrs. Elton], to Ireland by another [Jane Fairfax]. (334)

Despite the notable differences between Frank Churchill and Mr. Knightley, Frank Churchill is still comprehensible within the English language: his actions can be translated. The point is any character could send a letter to anywhere within Great Britain and have the description of Emma and Frank’s actions be understood universally as flirtation. That this letter is possible and sensible implies a cultural coherence among England that still allows for different approaches to Englishness. This is also why the reader is able to understand Emma’s acceptance of Knightley’s proposal; Emma’s response is never heard by the reader but universally understood. Instead of directly reporting Emma’s response, Austen famously writes, “on being so entreated.—What did [Emma] say?—Just what she ought, of course. A lady always does.—She said enough to show there need not be despair—and to invite him to say more himself” (390). Austen’s definition of what an (English) lady should say is just as tautological as her definition of “the true English style”: just as the true English style requires a pre-existing knowledge of Englishness to comprehend, to understand what a “lady” means requires a preexisting knowledge of what a lady “ought” to say.

In summation, *Emma* partakes in the functions of the national tale while refusing to exist within the typical space of the genre. The novel offers a definition of “the true English style” through Knightley, but challenges his status as the paragon of English virtues with Frank Churchill. Frank Churchill’s extravagant brand of Englishness exists at odds with Mr. Knightley’s reserve—even frustrating Mr. Knightley to the point where he can no longer maintain the reserve that characterizes his “true English style.” By displaying the limitations of Mr. Knightley’s “true English style,” Austen questions its very existence. Yet, even while she calls the “true English style” into question, Austen still affirms its existence by depicting cultural coherence amongst her characters and even her readers. At Box Hill both Jane Fairfax and Mrs. Elton are clearly aware of Frank and Emma’s flirtation—in fact no English word but flirtation can describe their actions. Austen allows readers to fill in the blanks in Mr. Knightley and Emma’s proposal scene; she assumes that the reader knows what a lady “ought” to say and therefore lets the reader write Emma’s response. Austen mobilizes this cultural encounter between different practices of Englishness to dislodge the national tale by following all of its functions but refusing to exist within its prescribed space.

Manners and Conduct: Englishness as a Performance

Early in the narrative Mrs. Weston shares her excitement over Emma and Harriet’s friendship with Mr. Knightley. Although Mr. Knightley disagrees, Mrs. Weston believes that the two will be good influences upon one another—she specifically believes that Harriet will encourage Emma to read more. Mr. Knightley, however, doubts all of this—especially Mrs. Weston’s ideas about Emma reading:

Emma has been meaning to read more ever since she was twelve years old. I have

seen a great many lists of her drawing up at various times of books that she meant to read regularly through—and very good lists they were—very well chosen, and very neatly arranged—sometimes alphabetically, and sometimes by some other rule. The list she drew up when only fourteen—I remember thinking it did her judgement so much credit, that I preserved it for some time; and I dare say she may have made out a very good list now. But I have done with expecting any course of steady reading from Emma. She will never submit to any thing requiring industry and patience, and a subjection of the fancy to the understanding. (31-2)

Emma is excellent at creating to-do lists; yet Emma is miserable at completing these wonderful to-do lists. Emma is quite capable of choosing excellent books to read; but what Emma lacks is the follow-through to actually read the books.

These qualities of Emma—her ability to choose good books and her inability to read the good books she's chosen—highlight the similar problem Emma experiences with Englishness. Emma understands the qualities that Englishness is meant to hold, yet she misunderstands how to apply them. For example, Emma sees Mr. Martin, and the yeoman class in general, as outside of her attention whereas Mr. Knightley feels precisely the opposite.²⁷ Emma asserts that if Mr. Martin were “A degree or two lower” she would be interested in helping him, “But a farmer can need none of my help, and is therefore in one sense as much above my notice as in every other he is below it” (25). Emma understands that Mr. Martin participates in English society yet holds him to the incorrect standards, completely misunderstanding *how* he participates. Mr. Martin, being a gentleman farmer—and a successful one at that—produces wealth for himself, his family, and Mr. Knightley; in short, he is an economic contributor to Highbury's community.

However, Emma only sees his lack of conspicuous consumption, which—for Emma—marks him as a bad match for Harriet.²⁸ By the end of the narrative Emma understands and fully supports the marriage because she can see how Harriet and her new husband, Mr. Martin, will materially and spiritually contribute to her community.²⁹

But *Emma* is not just a story of a spoiled girl learning to partake in her community; it is a story of an entire community continuously enacting Englishness. In her novels Austen is concerned with the differences between “conduct” and “manners.” She understands the difference between these words as Edmund does in *Mansfield Park*: “The *manners* I speak of, might rather be called *conduct*, perhaps, the result of good principles; the effect, in short, of those doctrines which it is [the clergy’s] duty to teach and recommend” (emphasis in original, *MP* 87). Conduct and manners are not quite discrete, yet they aren’t entirely the same thing either. Manners and conduct can be usefully compared to theory and practice; for Austen, a person has good conduct when he or she acts upon his or her own good manners.³⁰ This, of course, allows for a certain level of relativity. For example, when Frank Churchill pretends to go to London only to get a haircut, Emma does not know how to answer for his conduct. While “There was certainly no harm in his travelling sixteen miles twice over on such an errand,” Emma cannot help but feel discomfort at the fact that Frank’s London expedition does not “accord with rationality of plan, the moderation in expense, or even the unselfish warmth of heart” she had previously associated with him (Austen, *E* 186). It is, in fact, Frank Churchill’s confident disregard of his own conduct that causes Emma to reflect upon the relativity of conduct: “Wickedness is always wickedness, but folly is not always folly.—It depends upon the character of those who handle it” (192). Similarly, when Emma insults Miss

Bates at Box Hill, Mr. Knightley acknowledges that Emma is correct in *thinking* that Miss Bates is a touch “ridiculous.” Rather, Mr. Knightley finds fault in her conduct based upon the difference between their social positions: “Were [Miss Bates] a woman of fortune” Mr. Knightley would “leave every harmless absurdity to take its chance” (340). The danger that Mr. Knightley locates stems from Emma’s position of power which grants her influence over those who “would be entirely guided by [her] treatment of [Miss Bates]” (340).³¹

Englishness, for Austen, is inextricably bound up with “good” conduct—and “good conduct” is, in turn, tied to cultural coherence. By conceiving of Englishness as a mode of conduct, Austen radically differentiates her national tale from her contemporaries by emphasizing the nation and “Englishness as a conceptual, rather than geographical [...] frame of reference” (Mandal 26). When Mr. Knightley declares that Frank Churchill “can be amiable only in French, not in English” he aligns Englishness and Frenchness with varying types of conduct. Frank Churchill, according to Mr. Knightley, fails in aligning his conduct to English morality—Frank lacks “English delicacy towards the feelings of other people” (Austen, *E* 133). Ultimately, Frank Churchill’s lack of English delicacy and Emma’s bad conduct towards Mrs. Bates on Box Hill are dangerous to Highbury’s community for the same reason: they threaten the unity that allows for “English” conduct in the first place. If, as discussed above, Mr. Knightley’s “true English style” is only recognizable to those who have a preexisting knowledge of English manners, then Englishness depends upon openness and predictability in order to maintain its own cultural coherence.

Ironically, for as much as Austen seems to prize good conduct she also makes bad

conduct necessary towards the project of Englishness. Rather than encourage bad conduct, however, Austen uses the form of the novel to depict it in order to create an encounter between Emma's misunderstandings of conduct, Mr. Knightley's "true English style" of conduct, and Frank Churchill's lack of delicate English conduct.³² In order for Mr. Knightley's conduct to exist in "the true English style" it is necessary for it to be held up against other potential models. Thus, for some of the characters, such as Mr. Knightley, Englishness seems to come easily (most of the time). Others are less enlightened: when Frank Churchill seeks to "purchase" his citizenship at Ford's he makes the mistake of treating Englishness as a commodity that can be bought, sold, worn, and taken off at will. Likewise, Emma mistakenly sees Mr. Martin as less than a gentleman-farmer because of his inability to conspicuously consume Englishness. By the end of the novel, both Emma and Frank learn their mistake: both saw Englishness as a commodity, as a sterile adjective rather than an action. For Austen, "the true English style" is located in the space of the cultural encounter: "the true English style" exists in the act of discerning, evaluating, and maintaining the various forms of Englishness.

Notes

¹ In *The Annotated Emma*, David M. Shapard notes that Mr. Knightley helps Mr. Woodhouse manage the financial matters of his estate (299n1). This is the only citation that refers to his edition of *Emma*. All future citations shall refer to Steven Marcus's edition, published by Barnes & Nobles Classics in 2004, and shall be abbreviated to *E*. Likewise, my citations for *Mansfield Park*, *Northanger Abbey*, and Deidre Le Faye's *Jane Austen's Letters* shall be respectively abbreviated to *MP*, *NA*, and *Letters*.

² For example, Alistair Duckworth has influentially argued that, in *Emma*, Austen is concerned with the dangers of individualism. In her careless matchmaking “Emma does more than endanger her own happiness and that of her circle of friends. Beyond the personal, her imaginative errors have social and even epistemological implications” (150).

³ Arnold Hauser credits Sir Walter Scott with making the novel social; he writes, “in Jane Austen’s novels social reality was the soil in which the characters were rooted, but in no sense a problem which the novelist made any attempt to solve or interpret” (112-13).

⁴ The last two decades have shown an increased interest in Austen’s interactions with history; in *Matters of Fact in Jane Austen*, Janine Barchas charts the growing interest in Austen’s historicism starting in 1998 with Devoney Looser’s “Reading Jane Austen and Rewriting ‘Herstory’” (Barchas 9-13).

⁵ I am aware of Brian C. Southam’s “Jane Austen’s Englishness: *Emma* as National Tale” in *Persuasions* 30 (187-201). In his article, Southam makes an argument for reading *Emma* as a national tale that is remarkably similar to my own. Like myself, Southam argues that *Emma* parodies the national tale similarly to the way that *Northanger Abbey* parodies the gothic. However, because Southam relies only upon Katie Trumpener’s definition of the national tale, he does not take full account of the cultural encounter in *Emma* or the relationship between periphery and metropolis. Although we come to many similar conclusions, my goal in this essay is to provide a more complete argument for *Emma*’s status as a kind of national tale.

⁶ See Eve Sedgwick’s “Jane Austen and the Masturbating Girl.”

⁷ There are several exceptions to note: Deidre Lynch, for example, offers a brilliant discussion of the ever-present “noise” that structures Austen’s settings and narratives in “Jane Austen and the Social Machine.” For discussions of ethos in Austen’s communities see Frances Ferguson’s “Jane Austen, *Emma*, and the Impact of Form” and Heather M. Klemann’s “Ethos in Jane Austen’s *Emma*.” Additionally, in “*Emma*’s Depression,” Marshall Brown offers an insightfully bleak reading of Highbury’s psychic-space.

⁸ The term autoethnography is a term borrowed from Mary Louise Pratt’s *Imperial Eyes*: “If ethnographic texts are a means by which Europeans represent to themselves their (usually subjugated) others, autoethnographic texts are those the others construct in response to or in dialogue with those metropolitan representations” (Pratt 7).

⁹ “In an important sense the national tale is a tale that can be written neither by a foreigner nor by a native,” writes Ferris; “its specificity derives from its eluding both categories: standing neither inside nor outside, the national tale occupies the space of their encounter” (“Narrating Cultural Encounter” 292).

¹⁰ In *Remembrance and Imagination*, Joep Leerssen also refers to the exoticizing procedures of the national tale. For Leerssen, national tales are marked by an auto-exoticism, or “a mode of seeing, presenting and representing oneself in one’s otherness” (37). Presenting oneself as exotic does, in some ways, create a distinct national identity; it does not, however, remove the stamp of otherness. Ironically, national auto-exoticism produces a discrete nationality by using “the most peripheral areas [...] as the most representative and characteristic ones” (38)

¹¹ Trumpener writes, “The national tale before *Waverley* maps developmental stages topographically, as adjacent worlds in which characters move and then choose between; the movement of these novels [national tales] is geographical rather than historical” (*Bardic Nationalism* 141).

¹² Ina Ferris, to my knowledge, does not overtly exclude Austen from the national tale’s genre; however, Ferris’s definition seems to limit the national tale almost entirely to Ireland. Ferris writes, “The national tale addresses the external chonotype of reception not simply through the authorial move of representing the case of Ireland but also through the relocation of narrative ground—that is, through the apparently obvious move of dislodging the reader from English space” (“Narrating Cultural Enounter” 292).

Elsewhere, Ferris elaborates on this point: “Unlike the Irish tour, in which someone from ‘here’ traveled ‘over there’ and reported back, the national tale dislodged English readers from home space without securing the journey by a reassuringly English enunciation” (*The Romantic National Tale* 51). Because Austen’s narrators never leave England, the reader never experiences this kind of transformative “dislodging.”

¹³ In “The National Tale and Allied Genres, 1770s-1840s,” Burgess agrees with Ferris and Trumpener on the functions of the national tale: “Above all, the national tale is dialogical, reproducing diverse accents, vocabularies and sometimes languages as it attempts to provide an overview of a national community [...] that is continually in contact with representatives from other nations” (Burgess 40). However, Burgess does note the “slipperiness” of this definition and points out the geographical limitations that are often prescribed to the genre: “Yet although it is a characteristically Irish form, the national tale is not limited to Ireland” (39).

¹⁴ *Northanger Abbey*'s relationship to the Gothic has inspired an extensive debate amongst the novel's many critics. These debates typically focus on questions of unity: is there thematic coherence between *Northanger Abbey*'s first and second volume? What brings about this unity? Or, if there isn't unity, is the disunity intentional or a product of Austen's inexperience? For an argument that *Northanger Abbey* should be read as an ironic parody of the gothic—an anti-gothic novel of sorts—see the second chapter of Marvin Mudrick's *Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery*; for a response to Mudrick's argument that asserts *Northanger Abbey* is a parody of the gothic that is intentionally disunited see Frank J. Kearful's "Satire and Form of the Novel: The Problem of Aesthetic Unity in *Northanger Abbey*." Finally, for an interesting take on *Northanger Abbey* that reads the novel as a defense of Radcliffe and part of the gothic genre, see Nancy Armstrong's "The Gothic Austen" in *A Companion to Jane Austen*.

This list is, by no means, meant to be understood as exhaustive. Rather, my point is to draw attention to the debate itself; that such a debate has continued for so long highlights the ambiguity and ambivalence of Austen's generic relationships.

¹⁵ Although Austen may have intended Thorpe's description of General Tilney to be a bit of a red herring—as surely Thorpe is a less than trustworthy character—his description does not differ from Catherine's early descriptions. Thorpe describes General Tilney as "a fine old fellow [...] stout, active [...] [and] gentleman-like, good sort of fellow as ever lived" (*NA*, Austen 91). There are, however, several more instances of General Tilney being described fondly while in Bath. For example, when Catherine has the opportunity to properly meet General Tilney, he greets her with "solicitous politeness [...] [which] made her think with pleasure that he might be sometimes depended on"

(98). Later, after visiting with the Tilney family for a bit over an hour, Catherine leaves this meeting not feeling terrified or anxious but, rather, feeling “delighted by all that had passed” (99). Later still, Catherine argues with Isabella about General Tilney’s mannerisms. Isabella argues that he is too proud; Catherine, on the other hand, says the following of General Tilney: “But as for General Tilney, I assure you it would be impossible for anybody to behave to me with greater civility and attention” (124).

¹⁶ Upon arrival Catherine is disappointed to find that Northanger Abbey “was by no means unreasonably large, and contained neither tapestry nor velvet” (*NA*, Austen 155). She bemoans that “The walls were papered, the floor carpeted; the windows were neither less perfect nor more dim than those of the drawing-room below” (155). Suffering from confirmation bias, however, Catherine quickly finds new influence from the chest in her room, which, surely, must be part of an awful and secret past. The chest disappoints Catherine’s imagination: all that it contains is a “washing-bill” (163).

¹⁷ For example:

We shall never be such fools as to call in an enemy to the substance of any system to remove its corruptions, to supply its defects, or to perfect its construction. If our religious tenets should ever want a further elucidation, we shall not call on atheism to explain them. We shall not light up our temple from that unhallowed fire [...] It will be perfumed with other incense, than the infectious stuff which is imported by the smugglers of adulterated metaphysics. (Burke 89)

Here, Burke asserts that the English avoid foreign “infection” and corruption by refusing any foreign contamination. For more on Burke’s body politics and infection metaphors,

see Richard A. Barney's "Burke, Biomedicine, and Biobelligerence" in *Eighteenth Century: Theory & Interpretation* 54.2 (231-43).

¹⁸ Although *Northanger Abbey* was published posthumously in December of 1817, it was written between 1798-1799. For more on the revision and publication history of Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, please see Narelle Shaw's "Free Indirect Speech and Jane Austen's 1816 Revision of *Northanger Abbey*."

¹⁹ These four qualities of the national tale are derived from my literature review of the national tale's definition; for other detailed discussions of the national tale please see Gary Kelly's *English Fiction of the Romantic Period 1789-1830* (especially 92-98); Ina Ferris's "Narrating Cultural Encounter" in *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 51.3 (287-303), *The Achievement of Literary Authority* (105-36), and *The Romantic National Tale and the Question of Ireland*; Katie Trumpener's "National Character, Nationalist Plots: National Tale and Historical Novel in the Age of Waverley, 1806-1830" in *ELH* 60.3 (658-731) and *Bardic Nationalism* (especially 128-57); Miranda J. Burgess's "The National Tale and Allied Genres, 1770s-1840s" in *The Cambridge Companion to the Irish Novel* (39-59) and *British Fiction and the Production of Social Order, 1740-1830* (especially 150-85).

²⁰ Clair Lamont notes that "*Emma* is the most consciously English of Austen's novels, and that quality, while it is given expression by the heroine, is represented in action by the significantly named Knightley brothers" (311).

²¹ In *Emma* Austen uses the word "English" eight times. It is used once to describe Mr. Knightley's mannerisms while greeting his brother (Austen 89). The word English is used three times to describe Mr. Knightley's estate, Donwell Abbey (327).

Two more of the uses are enunciated by Mr. Knightley, who says “English” twice while asserting to Emma that Frank Churchill lacks “English delicacy” and “can be amiable only in French, not in English” (133). The word “English” twice refers to the language, itself. One of these instances is in reference to Mr. Knightley’s proposal to Emma: “The subject followed; it was in plain, unaffected, gentleman-like English, such as Mr. Knightley used even to the woman he was in love with” (405-6). The only other instance of the word “English” in *Emma* occurs on Box Hill when Emma thinks to herself that “no English word but flirtation could very well describe” her interactions with Frank Churchill (334). Thus seven out of eight occurrences of the word “English” are either associated with Mr. Knightley or enunciated by him. Furthermore, given that Mr. Knightley is present in the Box Hill scene while Emma flirts with Frank Churchill, each time Austen uses the word “English” it is in Mr. Knightley’s presence.

²² U.C. Knoepfelmacher’s “The Importance of Being Frank: Character and Letter-Writing in *Emma*” makes a similar point about Frank Churchill. For Knoepfelmacher, Frank Churchill and the letter-writing that sustains his relationship with Jane Fairfax are examples of “two of the external devices by which Jane Austen forces us—and eventually Emma—to reach the definition of false and true ‘manners’ on which the moral framework of her novel is built” (639).

²³ Despite the insistence upon Mr. Knightley being the living perfection of Englishness, it is important to note that Austen, herself, had a distaste for perfection. In a letter to her niece, Fanny, Jane Austen wrote: “Pictures of perfection [...] make me sick and wicked” (*Letters*, Austen 350).

²⁴ Deidre Lynch, in “Jane Austen and the Social Machine,” draws attention to the way that Jane Fairfax uses socially acceptable viewpoints to mask her own: “Jane Fairfax echoes what ‘every body’ thinks of Frank’s looks and manners in ways that safeguard her personal opinions and her private life [...] for Jane the voice of the world is protective of feeling—affording a kind of camouflage—as much as it is restrictive” (Lynch 231). In this way, Jane Fairfax adds yet another subtle layer to the barrier that keeps the reader from understanding her position.

²⁵ Austen spends the second chapter of the first volume of *Emma* detailing Mr. Weston and his son, Frank Churchill’s, life (12-6); similarly, Austen uses the second chapter of the second volume to detail Jane Fairfax’s history and character (147-53).

²⁶ For a detailed and fascinating discussion of letters, letter-writing, and the scandal that Jane and Frank’s postal-service romance causes, see David Wheeler’s “The British Postal Service, Privacy, and Jane Austen’s “Emma”.” For Wheeler, Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax’s use of the postal system is the major social transgression of *Emma*’s narrative.

²⁷ For Emma, Mr. Martin is “A young farmer [...] [and therefore] the very last sort of person to raise [her] curiosity” (25); for Mr. Knightley, Mr. Martin is “a respectable, intelligent gentleman-farmer” (54).

²⁸ In “The Gentleman Farmer in *Emma*: Agrarian Writing and Jane Austen’s Cultural Idealism,” Robert James Merrett argues that Emma’s sense of superiority over Mr. Martin “rests in her belief that the Martins are not conspicuous consumers and therefore cannot treat Harriet properly. Regretting that Knightley’s investment in farming

prevents him from keeping a carriage, she thinks a carriage becomes ‘the owner of Donwell Abbey,’ such consumerism defining gentility to her” (732).

²⁹ In “The Woman, The Gypsies, and England: Harriet Smith’s National Role,” Michael Kramp argues that “The union of Harriet and Robert Martin becomes a key element in *Emma*’s depiction of the post-Revolutionary project to solidify the state, safeguard its culture, and construct a ‘national’ race” (161).

³⁰ Paula Byrne notes that Austen held an ambivalent relationship to the conduct book tradition, paradoxically mocking and praising the advice that they offered. “The key to the paradox is the distinction between theory and practice,” writes Byrne, “Jane Austen valued good manners in action, but scorned those who did not practise what they preached” (298).

³¹ Similarly, in *Mansfield Park*, Edmund is discomforted by Mary Crawford’s conduct while speaking of her uncle, Admiral Crawford. Edmund does not wish to “censure [Mary’s] *opinions*” but finds “impropriety in making them public” (emphasis in original, 60-61). Mary’s good manners, in this situation, allow her to see the inappropriateness of her uncle’s behavior—but, for Edmund, she manifests bad conduct in shedding light upon it.

³² One could also make an argument for a cultural encounter of differing brands of Englishness through Mrs. Elton’s struggle to find a place in Highbury’s community. Although Austen depicts her in an unflattering light, Mrs. Elton is clearly anxious about her new position in a new society. This is, perhaps, most evident in her contradictory statements which are meant to appease whomever she is speaking to. For example, in the space of just three paragraphs Mrs. Elton asserts her fondness of exploring only to

entirely reverse it: “there is nothing like staying at home for real comfort. Nobody can be more devoted to home than I am” (246).

Chapter 3: Reimagining Unity: The Poetic Space of Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley*

In the final chapter of *Waverley*'s second volume Sir Walter Scott describes the Battle of Prestonpans from two distinct perspectives. Initially, Scott describes the Highland army from a detached bird's-eye-perspective, as though it was drawn upon a map: "The Highland army, which now occupied the eastern end of the wide plain, or corn field, so often referred to, was drawn up in two lines, extending from the morass towards the sea" (Scott, *Waverley* 248).¹ Scott uses this perspective in order to depict "actual" history for his readers; without an attachment to any particular person's viewpoint Scott is free to explain the Highland army's feudal divisions and battle tactics. It is in this way—by presenting the reader with a detached and impersonal image of this historical battle—that Scott sets the stage for a different, more personal perspective: that of his protagonist, Edward Waverley. Scott uses theatrical language to signal the transition from his historical bird's-eye-view of the battle to Waverley's fictional perspective: "the sun, which was now above the horizon, dispelled the mists. The vapours rose like a curtain, and shewed the two armies in the act of closing" (249). This shift in perspective grants Scott a different kind of freedom: he is still able to relate history to his readers, yet he is freer to add fictional elements to this history in order to offer the reader an illusion of a more personal experience of the events. For the remainder of the second volume the reader follows Waverley as he navigates the confusion and terror of the battle, attempting to save—rather than kill—English soldiers.

The two perspectives used in the above scene reveal Scott's strategy for conveying (as well as creating) the meaning of historical events and spaces. Through these two perspectives, Scott creates what Edward Said refers to as an imaginative

geography.² Drawing from Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*, Said explains that imaginative geographies are made up of two different kinds of space, objective and poetic:

The inside of a house [...] acquires a sense of intimacy, secrecy, security, real or imagined, because of the experiences that come to seem appropriate for it. The objective space of a house—its corners, corridors, cellar, rooms—is far less important than what poetically it is endowed with, which is usually a quality with an imaginative or figurative value we can name and feel: thus a house may be haunted, or homelike, or prisonlike, or magical. So space acquires emotional and even rational sense by a kind of poetic process, whereby the vacant or anonymous reaches of distance are converted into meaning for us here. (Said, *Orientalism* 54-55)

Although the objective space of the house is not equal in importance to its poetic space, this is not to say that the objective structure is completely unimportant. The poetic space relies upon the objective space as a literal grounding—without the objective space there could be no poetic space attached to it. At the same time, the poetic space is what provides the objective space with meaning. Scott's description of The Battle of Prestonpans can be easily likened to Said and Bachelard's house metaphor: the movement of the armies and the actual geography of the space refer to the objective or physical space, whereas Waverley's personal view of the battle corresponds to the poetic values of the time and space. In essence the physical space acts as a container for the poetic space: the objective, bird's-eye-view explains the physical space which sets limits and borders for the meaning—the poetic space—that grows from Waverley's actions.

In recent years many of Sir Walter Scott's critics have taken note of the way in which Scott uses fictional and "real" spaces to depict England and Scotland. Particularly, many critics have been concerned over the authenticity of Scott's depictions. Although James Reed and Saree Makdisi staunchly disagree over the authenticity of *Waverley*'s fictive settings, both agree upon Scott's methodology for creating these imagined spaces.³ As Reed notes, *Waverley*'s narrative conflates characters and landscape to the point of interdependency; the characters simultaneously influence and receive influence from the space they occupy: "What [Scott] does is see man, and the works of man, in a total landscape: land, buildings, people, manners, history, fused by time" (Reed 9). Similarly, Makdisi notes that "The imaginary map that underlies and sustains *Waverley*'s tour—the 'ground' on which the narrative is written[...]—involves the simultaneous creation and representation of an imaginary terrain" (Makdisi 85). What Makdisi and Reed have both identified in *Waverley* is a tautological process whereby the land legitimizes its representation via the authority of its own creation. In this final chapter, I shall examine the "imaginary map" which "underlies and sustains" *Waverley*'s narrative, as noted by Makdisi. It is my contention that, in *Waverley*, Scott's fictive settings—such as Tully-Veolan and Waverley-Honour—are primarily concerned with poetic space more than objective space. Scott designs the poetic space of England and Scotland in order to alter his readers' understandings of their imaginative geographies. My argument is that Scott's map of England and Scotland's imaginative geography is an integral part of Scott's strategy for persuading the reader to view England and Scotland as a united imagined community—that of Great Britain. By examining Scott's portrayal of England in the first few chapters of *Waverley* alongside Tully-Veolan's progression through the

course of the novel, I seek to show how Scott fashions the evolution—or progress—of his fictive landscapes so that the poetic space moves from the interior to the exterior. By shifting the poetic space into an exterior manifestation, Scott makes Scotland a knowable community to his readers. Ultimately, in making Scotland a knowable community to his readers, Scott seeks to effect a unity in the present by anchoring it in the past. By having *Waverley*'s narrative take place in Great Britain's recent past, Scott is able to display the poetic space of England and Scotland in such a way that the reader is able to establish a sense of serial continuity which buries their divisive border in the distant past.

This chapter shall be divided into three sections. The first explores Scott's English spaces in *Waverley*, an often ignored topic. In this section I will show that Scott displays England problematically: as a divided nation that produces incomplete citizens. Like Austen, Scott concerns himself with the difference between manners and conduct. *Waverley*, like *Emma*, possesses a concept of good manners, yet lacks practical social training. Because *Waverley*'s family is divided by arbitrary politics, they are unable to provide him with the social training necessary to become a comfortable member of England's community of practice. Thus, like *Emma*, *Waverley* has not been taught "good conduct." Following this, in the second section, I discuss Scott's Scottish landscapes—specifically Tully-Veolan and its progression through the novel. Over the course of the novel *Waverley* becomes acquainted with Tully-Veolan, bears witness to its ruins, and rebuilds it. As I will show, the rebuilt Tully-Veolan is simultaneously new and old. *Waverley*'s rebuilt rendition of the village holds true to most of Tully-Veolan's objective space, however the same cannot be said of Tully Veolan's poetic space. By repairing the indiscernible masses of stone so that they resemble actual bears, *Waverley* makes Tully-

Veolan's poetic space discernible to outsiders. In doing so, *Waverley* transforms Tully-Veolan into a knowable community, just as *Waverley* seeks to transform Scotland into a knowable community for England. Finally, in my third section, I will discuss how Scott depicts an anachronistic unity between England and Scotland in order to effect a present sense of unity between them. In the final chapter of *Waverley*, Scott condenses the novel's entire narrative—including the progress of Tully-Veolan—into a static “moment” in time which can be juxtaposed against Scotland's present state. By encouraging his reader to forget the violence between the two separate nations so that they can remember their eventual unity, Scott draws new borders for his nation. These new borders are not between either England or Scotland, but around both—in the form of Great Britain.

Scott's England and the Production of *Waverley*

In *Waverley*'s opening chapter the narrator offers a complex view of humanity while explaining a mission statement of sorts for his narrative: Scott has thrown “the force of [his] narrative upon the characters and passions of the actors” so that he can compare and contrast English and Scottish national character with the ultimate goal of “vary[ing] and [...] illustrat[ing] the moral lessons which [he] would willingly consider as the most important part of [his] plan” (Scott, *W* 5-6). Scott's plan, as he reveals at the end of the novel, is to demonstrate the progress of national character that Scotland has made since the Jacobite Uprising of 1745. Scott locates the forces of his narrative within the “passions and characters of the actors” because he wishes to persuade his reader to see both the present England and Scotland in a new light: not as England or Scotland—but rather as a unified and coherent Great Britain. Although Scott claims that there are “passions common to men in all stages of society,” he is quick to note that these passions

do not always manifest uniformly: “Upon these passions it is no doubt true that the state of manners and laws casts a necessary colouring; but the bearings [...] remain the same, though the tincture may not only be different, but opposed in strong contradistinction”

(5). In other words, all of humanity may have similar passions, but our nations and communities—which teach us habits and practices of living and being part of the community—tincture the manifestation of these passions. Thus, for Scott, belonging to a nation is not something that one does passively—rather, it is an active relationship and process whereby individuals constantly interact with the “state of manners and laws.”⁴

In the first five chapters Scott utilizes Waverley’s desultory education to suggest that belonging to a nation is a process which must be both taught and learned. Though these chapters were, according to his notes to the 1829 edition, “censured as tedious and unnecessary,” Scott could not be persuaded “to retract or cancel” them (401n5).⁵ Much of Scott’s point in these opening chapters is that Waverley’s education and upbringing do not teach him the practices which would allow him to actively become English. Both figures of authority in Waverley’s early life—his father, Richard Waverley, and his uncle, Sir Everard Waverley—are divided against one another because of their arbitrary political distinctions.⁶ Sir Everard’s political alignment is based upon a passive inheritance, involving little personal deliberation: “Sir Everard had inherited from his sires the whole train of tory or high-church predilections and prejudices, which had distinguished the house of Waverley since the great civil war” (6). Richard Waverley, on the other hand, has based his politics—and even his marriage—upon personal gain; by rejecting his family’s Tory principles, Richard is able to use his political conversion to raise his position beyond his merits:

The accession of the near relation of one of these steady and inflexible opponents was considered as a means of bringing over more converts, and therefore Richard Waverley met with a share of ministerial favour more than proportioned to his talents or his political importance. (7)

The two brothers, now occupying opposite political sides—yet both for arbitrary reasons—feud with one another until Sir Everard grows attached to his nephew, Edward Waverley. It is through the young Edward Waverley that the two brothers are able to find a modicum of common ground—though both for their own interests. Sir Everard hopes to pass down the Waverley family's Tory disposition along with his estate, Waverley-Honour. Richard Waverley, on the other hand, sees personal gain in Sir Everard's attachment to young Edward Waverley: he hopes to gain ownership of Waverley-Honour through his son's inheritance. Thus, although they have found some common ground in Edward Waverley, it is not enough to quell their feud. The two remain suspicious of one another and, as a result, hire separate tutors for Waverley, effectively ensuring that his education is as divided as his upbringing. Because both his education and his upbringing are so divided, Waverley, himself, is divided—hence Waverley's wavering.

Etienne Wenger suggests that individuals gain a sense of belonging through processes of engagement, imagination, and alignment.⁷ When an individual engages with members of an imagined community, that individual carries assumptions, understandings, and misunderstandings of that community. In order to understand oneself as part of an imagined community, then, one must align an imagined identity to an imagination of the community's identity, which is built through experiences extrapolated from engagement with members of that community.⁸ Wenger's communities of practice, which are inspired

by Benedict Anderson's conception of imagined communities,⁹ are quite useful for understanding Waverley's relationship with England—his imagined community. Because Waverley receives little to no social training from his father, aunt and uncle, and even his tutors, he feels a sense of discomfort with his imagined community:

when upon any particular occasion Edward mingled with accomplished and well-educated young men of his own rank and expectations, he felt an inferiority in their society, not so much from deficiency of information, as from the want of the skill to command and to arrange that which he possessed [...] Where we are not at ease, we cannot be happy; and therefore it is not surprising, that Edward Waverley supposed that he disliked and was unfitted for society, merely because he had not yet acquired the habit of living in it with ease and comfort, and of reciprocally giving and receiving pleasure. (Scott, *W* 16-17)

Scott understands communities as Wenger does, as groups that—through a process of collective learning—come to share practices and habits.¹⁰ Because Waverley never has the opportunity to properly engage with his community, he is unable to imagine what community means in a larger sense. Therefore he is also incapable of aligning his identity to his imagined community. In short, Waverley lacks understanding of communal practices that demonstrate his membership—or, in Scott's words, Waverley lacks "habits of living" that would allow him to "command and arrange" his knowledge. Because Waverley is not "deficient in information," but rather deficient in the ability to use, apply, and interpret information, his confusion and sense of inferiority stem from his inability to understand the political meanings of his own and others' actions. At this point in the novel one might argue that Waverley is, in fact, *not* English, at least according to Scott,

because Waverley is incapable of feeling at home or comfortable within English society.

Thus, lacking social engagement, Waverley is left to fill England's physical space with a poetic understanding of his own design. Drawing from romantic tales—just as Catherine in *Northanger Abbey* draws from gothic tales—Waverley fills his understanding of society with renditions of his family's antiquity. In order to compensate for his social deficiencies, Waverley imagines an ideal, picturesque world to fill the gaps in his knowledge. Scott describes little of England's physical space because, to his readers, the objective space of England is obvious. Yet Scott does describe the landscape of Waverley's two favorite haunts, both of which house relics of the past in order to show how Waverley elaborates on their setting with romantic designs of his own. The first of these is “distinguished by a moss-grown gothic monument, which retained the name of Queen's Standing, [where] Elizabeth herself was said to have pierced seven bucks with her own arrows” (Scott 19). The other is by Mirkwood-Mere, a lake near Waverley Honour, where “There stood in former times a solitary tower upon a rock almost surrounded by the water, which had acquired the name of the Strength of Waverley, because in perilous times it had often been the refuge for the family” (19). It is here that Waverley “loved to ‘chew the cud of sweet and bitter fancy,’ and, like a child amongst his toys, culled and arranged, from the splendid yet useless imagery and emblems with which his imagination was stored, visions as brilliant and as fading as those of an evening sky” (20). Because Waverley is incapable of commanding and arranging his societal knowledge in a way that allows him to integrate himself with his community, he instead retreats to his imagination where he *is* capable of commanding, arranging, and organizing his romantic knowledge into forms that please him. Much of *Waverley*'s narrative, then,

is a tale of alignment: specifically Waverley learning to align himself with “real” history.¹¹

Scott describes so little of England’s physical space because, to his ideal reader, England’s objective space is well known. Instead, Scott quietly focuses on England’s poetic space by presenting it through the eyes of Waverley. Ultimately, what Scott presents is an arbitrarily divided community that neither has, nor teaches its younger members, the practices that sustain its poetic space. The England which Scott presents is an England in danger. Waverley is a symptom of what is to come from divisive politics: divided citizens who invent insubstantial poetic spaces to fill the emptiness of their imagined community. As we shall see in the upcoming section, Scott presents Scotland similarly as a community that is unable to support itself or present its poetic space meaningfully.

Scott’s Scotland: Tully-Veolan’s Incoherent Representation

It is Waverley’s excursion into a foreign land, Scotland, which allows him to understand his own Englishness. When Waverley first enters Scotland, he enters as a stranger. To Waverley, Tully-Veolan’s “houses seemed miserable in the extreme, especially to an eye accustomed to the smiling neatness of English cottages” (35). Notice how, even though Waverley is an outsider to English society, he still cannot help but compare Scotland to the England he knows. Because Waverley cannot help but make these comparisons, the populace of Tully-Veolan registers as less than human to him: “Three or four of the village girls, returning from the well or brook with pitchers and pails upon their heads [...] somewhat resembled Italian forms of landscape” (36). For Waverley, the villagers of Tully-Veolan do not resemble figures in an Italian landscape—

they quite literally resemble the landscape itself. Like landscape paintings, Tully-Veolan, and those who occupy it, register as two-dimensional, “flat” figures because Waverley is unable to determine their meaning.

This is because, for Scott, the way people are interpreted is much of what characterizes poetic space. Waverley, a stranger to Scotland, knows nothing of the Scottish economy, culture, or political system and thus he feels ill at ease with his surroundings: “The whole scene was depressing, for it argued, at the first glance, at least a stagnation of industry, and perhaps of intellect. Even curiosity [...] seemed of a listless cast in the village of Tully-Veolan” (36-7). Because Waverley lacks knowledge of Scotland, he lacks the ability to closely examine the village. That is, because the objective space of Scotland is so far removed from his sense of the familiar, Waverley draws a false and unfair comparison between England and Scotland. Unable to locate comfort, he misinterprets the meaning of his surroundings and assumes that the villagers lack industry, intellect, and even curiosity. He therefore looks for ways that the village can be “improved”:

a mere Englishman, in search of the *comfortable*, a word peculiar to his native tongue, might have wished the clothes less scanty [...] or perhaps might even have thought the whole person and dress considerably improved by a plentiful application of spring water, with a *quantum sufficit* of soap. (emphasis in original, 36)

Waverley is unable to locate comfort in Tully-Veolan for the same reason that he cannot find it in England: he lacks an education that allows him to understand the villagers’ practices and culture—in short, he lacks the ability to understand Tully-Veolan’s poetic

space. The narrator, on the other hand, offers an alternative reading to counter Waverley's:

Yet the physiognomy of the people, when more closely examined, was far from exhibiting the indifference of stupidity; their features were rough, but remarkably intelligent, grave, but the very reverse of stupid [...] The children also [...] had a look and manner of life and interest. It seemed upon the whole, as if poverty, and indolence [...] were combining to depress the natural genius and acquired information of a hardy, intelligent, and reflecting peasantry. (Scott 37)

Unlike Waverley, *Waverley's* narrator does not lack the ability to apply a close reading of the villagers in order to understand the root of the problem: poverty. Without this knowledge, Waverley is left to either feel uncomfortable or invent his own poetic space to compensate.

Yet, at the same time, Scott goes to lengths to show that this lack of understanding is not specific to Waverley. Indeed, Scott's point in much of this first description is that Tully-Veolan's community does not project meaning for outsiders who do not already share the villagers' history and values. In short, Tully-Veolan's poetic space is not easily understood from an outside standpoint. This can predominantly be seen through Scott's description of the "supporters" of Bradwardine's estate:

In the centre of the exterior barrier was the upper gate of the avenue, opening under an archway, battlemented on top, and adorned with two large weather-beaten mutilated masses of upright stone, which, if the tradition of the hamlet could be trusted, *had once represented*, at least had once been designed to represent, two rampant bears, the supporters of the family of Bradwardine.

(emphasis added, 38)

Being a feudal community, Tully-Veolan's identity is largely drawn from its leader, Lord Bradwardine. However, from an outside standpoint, such as Waverley's, the meaning of these mutilated masses of stone is unclear. To say that the statues "*had once represented* [...] rampant bears" is to say that the statues *no longer actually represent* those bears. Furthermore, when one considers that those bears are "the supporters of the family of Bradwardine," then Scott's passage suggests that the bears no longer present representational support for Tully-Veolan's community.

In order to understand the meaning of these "mutilated masses of stone" it is necessary to possess the storehouse of cultural information that comes along with being a member of Tully-Veolan's community. Members of Tully-Veolan's community are taught to recognize the statues as bears; thus, for members of the community, the statues do not need to resemble bears in order to represent them.¹² This is further demonstrated through the community's practice of embedding repetitions of the bears throughout Tully-Veolan:

It must not be forgotten, that all sorts of bears, small and large, demi and in full proportion, were carved over the windows, upon the ends of gables, terminated the spouts, and supported the turrets, with the ancient family motto, '*Bewar the Bar,*' cut under each hyperborean form. (emphasis in original, Scott 39)

Tully-Veolan's citizens' collective act of repeating the bears throughout the village establish them as a community of practice. Yet this practice lacks meaning from an outside standpoint because it is impossible for an outsider to understand the relationship between these smaller bears and the large mutilated masses of stone, which "once

resembled” bears. Instead of reinforcing the bears that provide representational support for the Bradwardine family and community, these smaller and varied bears create a cacophony of images that Waverley struggles to comprehend. The exterior, objective space of these statues does not easily communicate their interior poetic meaning to an outsider and, therefore, Scott’s initial depiction of Tully-Veolan does not allow it to be a knowable or understandable community.

Having spent so much time engaging the Baron in conversation “on the neutral ground” of history, Waverley comes to associate the Baron’s habit with Tully-Veolan and, therefore, uses parts of the Baron’s personality—specifically his constant use of quasi-Latin—to understand Tully-Veolan’s objective and poetic space. Thus, even though Waverley finds Tully-Veolan in ruins, he is still able to use and apply his previous knowledge to interpret Tully-Veolan’s ruins. His eyes “naturally” seek a particular space of Baron Bradwardine’s estate, Rose’s balcony: “Viewing the front of the building, thus wasted and defaced, his eyes naturally sought the little balcony which more properly belonged to Rose’s apartment—her *troisieme*, or rather *cinquieme etage*” (emphasis in original, 328). Seeking the space of Rose’s apartment, Waverley returns to the language of Rose’s father, Baron Bradwardine. His eye has been trained to know not only the objective space of where Rose’s apartment was, but also the cultural terms that help fashion its poetics. In short, Waverley’s actions here show that once he has spent time getting to know Tully-Veolan’s community, he gains the ability to understand his surroundings and, eventually, the ability to command and arrange these understandings.

By the end of the novel, Waverley returns and funds the reparation of Tully-Veolan which re-imagines the village as it once was. The following is Scott’s description

of the rebuilt Tully-Veolan:

excepting that the heavy stables, which had burned down, were replaced by buildings of a lighter and more picturesque appearance, all seemed as much as possible restored to the state in which [Lord Bradwardine] had left it, when he assumed arms some months before. The pigeon-house was replenished; the fountain played with its usual activity, and not only the Bear who predominated over its bason [sic], but all the other Bears whatsoever were replaced upon their stations, and renewed or repaired with so much care, that they bore no tokens of the violence which had so lately descended upon them. [...] the house itself had been thoroughly repaired, as well as the gardens, with the strictest attention to maintain the original character of both, and to remove, as far as possible, all appearance of the ravage they had sustained. (369)

Waverley rebuilds Tully-Veolan in such a way that it is simultaneously new and old. On the one hand, Waverley's repairs are done "with the strictest attention to maintain the original character" of the space. However, Waverley—just as Scott—is more concerned with Tully-Veolan's poetic space than its objective space. The new bears not only efface the acts of destruction which necessitated their rebuilding, but also efface the state they were in before this destruction took place. Before they were destroyed, the statues, from an outside standpoint, were "mutilated masses of stone"; now, they resemble actual bears. Thus the poetic space—which, if one possessed the knowledge, allowed mutilated masses of stone to be understood as bears—has shifted to the exterior as their meaning is apparent from the outside. Thus, in making the visible "coterminous with the knowable" (Schmidgen 193), Waverley has kept true to the *meaning* of Tully-Veolan's "original

character,” but in so doing has also ironically abandoned any attempt to rebuild Tully-Veolan to the exact physical specifications.

In order for Scotland to be part of England in more than just theory—but in practice as well—Scott needed to make Scotland recognizable and understandable to the English. Thus, *Waverley* recreates Tully-Veolan *almost* as it once was. It is the same Tully-Veolan but with an important twist: it is an English translation of the space. By shifting Tully-Veolan’s poetic space from the interior to the exterior, Scott fashions Tully-Veolan as a “recognizable totality.” The power that comes from this is not only the power to recognize, but the power to identify. In making Tully-Veolan identifiable, Scott grants the English the symbolic power necessary to understand Scotland as part of Great Britain’s space.¹³ Furthermore, although *Waverley* allows Baron Bradwardine to retain his title, it is made explicit that the house no longer actually belongs to a Scottish citizen; rather, it belongs to an Englishman, specifically *Waverley*. Ultimately, Scott suggests that unity between the English and the Scottish will give benefits to both sides. By incorporating Scotland into Great Britain, Scotland will gain from England’s wealth and industry while England will gain from Scotland’s rich culture. The chapter ends with the novel’s last piece of spoken dialogue: Baron Bradwardine praising “the united houses of *Waverley-Honour* and *Bradwardine*” (374). The subtext of uniting these two houses with *Waverley* holding the actual authority is that the Tully-Veolan estate has, in effect, become a new *Waverley-Honour*. Thus, when *Waverley* returns “home” to Tully-Veolan, he isn’t returning to Scotland or England; he is entering a home in Great Britain.

Memory and Forgetting: The Importance of (Re)Imagining The Nation

The one addition that *Waverley* makes to the Baron’s estate is the portrait of

himself and Fergus. In this painting, Scott offers a static—yet absurd¹⁴—image of historical Scottish and English cooperation:

It was a large and spirited painting representing Fergus Mac-Ivor and Waverley in their Highland dress, the scene a wild, rocky, and mountainous pass, down which the clan were descending in the background [...] the ardent, fiery, and impetuous character of the unfortunate Chief of Glennaquoich was finely contrasted with the contemplative, fanciful, and enthusiastic expression of his happier friend. (Scott 373)

In this description Scott creates a clear and explicit contrast between “the unfortunate” Fergus Mac-Ivor, representing the Highlanders, and the “happier” Waverley, representing the English. The terms Scott uses to describe Waverley—“contemplative, fanciful, and enthusiastic”—show a sense of passion *with* intelligence which opposes the words used to describe Fergus. The words used to describe Fergus—“ardent, fiery, and impetuous”—similarly show passion, yet pointedly lack the sense of intelligence prescribed to Waverley’s passion.

Scott pays little attention to the intelligence, however, as his goal here—more so than anywhere else in the novel—is not to report history but to effect it. As his mission statement in *Waverley*’s first chapter outlines, Scott wishes to contrast English and Scottish culture in order to illustrate a moral lesson for his readers. This moral lesson does, indeed, depend on the differences between these two cultures—but Scott’s emphasis on difference in his first historical novel shouldn’t be understood as something similar to the national tale’s tendency towards autoexoticism. Rather, the differences Scott wishes to locate are temporal: he wants to show the differences between England

and Scotland's relationship in the present to that of the past; in short, Scott hopes to leave the reader with the impression that there is—and has been—a historical unity between these two spaces. Thus, Scott uses this painting to foreground interdependency between Waverley and Fergus, England and Scotland. The painting presents both Waverley and Fergus “in their Highland dress” (373). The word “their” is problematic when it comes to Waverley. Although it is only months since the civil war ended, Waverley seems to have already forgotten the role he played in this rebellion. The word “their” implies possession. While Waverley did, indeed, possess clothes that were considered traditional Highland dress, he does not possess these clothes in the same manner that Fergus does. Waverley merely possessed the physical artifact, the clothes,¹⁵ whereas Fergus possessed the clothes *and* the cultural understandings associated with the clothes. By doing this, Scott creates a false and anachronistic sense of unity between the Highlanders and the English; the painting depicts the English adopting forms of the Scottish culture, yet, in reality, the reverse was true: the laws put in place shortly after the rebellion—such as the Act of Proscription and the Abolition of Heritable Jurisdiction Act of 1747—forced the Scottish to abandon their physical possessions as well as the cultural practices associated with them.¹⁶

To focus solely on the falsity of this painting is, however, to miss the forest for the trees. The painting's absurdity is very much part of Scott's point: the way we remember and understand the past influences the way we understand and recognize the present. The painting is absurd in order to dislodge the readers' understanding of England and Scotland's relationship and make them more aware of the progress that they have made together. As Scott writes in “A Postscript, which should have been a preface”:

There is no European nation which, within the course of half a century or little more, has undergone so complete a change as this kingdom of Scotland [...] The gradual influx of wealth, and extension of commerce, have since united to render the present people of Scotland a class of beings as different from their grandfathers, as the existing English are from those of Queen Elizabeth's time [...] But the change, though steadily and rapidly progressive, has, nevertheless, been gradual; and, like those who drift down the stream of a deep and smooth river, we are not aware of the progress we have made until we fix our eye on the now-distant point from which we set out. (Scott 375)

In *Waverley*, Scott does not chart the gradual “progress” Scotland has made; rather, by having his readers “fix their eyes” on this “now-distant point,” Scott makes the “progress” appear obvious. Furthermore, Scott is very clear about the source of this progress: “The gradual influx of wealth” as well as the “extension of commerce” both come from Scotland’s newfound “unity” with England. Notice, too, how in this final chapter Scott relies on visual cues in order to organize the readers’ understanding of Scotland. Scott asks his readers to manually adjust their sense of time to imagine their present-day Scotland juxtaposed with the Scotland of 1745. In this act the entirety of the Jacobite Rebellion and *Waverley*’s involvement become a static image that the reader must compare to the seeming tranquility of Scotland’s present circumstances.¹⁷ Yet, because the reader experiences this history through the eyes of *Waverley*, they, too, learn to see Scotland in a different light—just as *Waverley* has. The image of *Waverley* and Fergus’s portrait—an Englishman and a Scotsman, united, and fighting side-by-side—deeply affects Scotland’s present poetic space, suggesting the possibility of greater future

unity.

Furthermore, Scott uses *Waverley*'s Tully-Veolan and Waverley's relation to that space to "map" Scotland's poetic space as a "recognizable totality." The three images of Tully-Veolan that Scott offers us through the novel—its impoverished "beginnings," its destruction, and its ultimate re-imagining—act as static images of Scotland's progress happening almost all at once. The evolution of Tully-Veolan throughout *Waverley*'s narrative can be seen as a synecdoche for the way in which Scott understands the larger processes of history. In order to make Scotland a "recognizable totality" Scott must create continuity between Scotland's past and England's present. While, at first glance, glaring absurdities like the painting of Waverley and Fergus might prevent continuity, in fact, the opposite is true. As Benedict Anderson explains, nations as imagined communities depend upon narrative continuity for their identities. When something cannot be remembered, such as birth, its explanation must be narrated: "Awareness of being embedded in secular, serial time, with all its implications of continuity, yet of 'forgetting' the experience for this continuity [...] engenders the need for a narrative of 'identity'" (Anderson 205). In terms of *Waverley*, when Waverley—or the reader—"forgets" the absurdity of the painting he or she must "remember" a narrative which allows for the continuity between the newly invented past and the present. This also is true for Tully-Veolan: by initially depicting Tully-Veolan's poetic space as unrecognizable, uncomfortable, and absurd, Scott sets the end of the Jacobite Revolution of 1745 as the 'origin' point of England and Scotland's unity because this is the point where Tully-Veolan—and therefore Scotland—becomes a recognizable part of England. Ultimately, Scott's vision of Great Britain becomes a recognizable totality by establishing a serial

continuity. Scott makes it necessary to remember the events of the 1745 revolution as a “moment” of disunity—an anomaly—in England and Scotland’s history. This disunity is remembered as tied to a specific event and therefore becomes an anomaly in the readers’ mind, thereby rendering England and Scotland as always already united and continuous.

The moral lesson, which Scott hopes to offer his readers through *Waverley*, is the importance of appropriately educating one’s imagination. In fact, Scott’s *Waverley* is best understood as a *bildungsroman* of imagination. At the beginning of the novel, Waverley’s wavering is symptomatic of his misuse of imagination. This can be seen both in the way he wavers between political alignments as well as in the way he wavers between women. For example, at the beginning of the novel, Waverley falls in love with a woman he knows little to nothing about, save her name: Cecilia Stubbs. His imagination supplies her with “supernatural beauty” and erects “her into a positive goddess” (21). His worship for Miss Stubbs is, however, short-lived. Before long, Waverley forgets Cecilia Stubbs in favor of his new attraction: Flora Mac-Ivor. When he looks upon Flora in the famous waterfall scene:

Edward thought he had never, even in his wildest dreams, imagined a figure of such exquisite and interesting loveliness. The wild beauty of the retreat, bursting upon him as if by magic, augmented the mingled feeling of delight and awe with which he approached her, like a fair enchantress of Boiardo or Ariosto, by whose nod the scenery around seemed to have been created an Eden in the wilderness.

(117-18)

For Waverley, Flora’s beauty is magnified and augmented by the sublimity of her surroundings. Like Cecilia Stubbs before her, Waverley is attracted to Flora because he is

able to elaborate upon her beauty by associating her with romantic figures and ideals. In both cases Waverley's imagination is elaborative as it is restrictive: by elaborating on the beauty of these two women, Waverley further restricts his ability to interact with society because he is effectively alienating himself from reality.

Waverley's day-dreaming becomes just as dangerous as Emma's ill-conceived matchmaking schemes—if not moreso. Waverley's daydreaming effectively limits his vision: while he is busy imagining Flora as a Highland Goddess, he entirely misses the very real rebellion brewing around him. However, this is not to say that Scott viewed imagination as something strictly opposed to reason and rationality. Rather, as Jana Davis claims, Scott's view of imagination is more closely aligned to the theories of Dugald Stewart; Scott considers the imagination as “a source of wisdom and a dangerous deceiver [...] it is [...] a potent force [in] shaping the individual's comprehension of the world and his action in it, for good or for ill” (Davis 438). The imagination has the capacity for both good and ill; thus Scott prizes the importance of learning how to effectively use one's imagination. Because Waverley lacks this instruction at the beginning of the novel he also lacks “any fixed political opinion” to set against any particular person's persuasion (Scott, *W* 138). Thus he immediately conforms to whoever is around him—whether that is his father, his uncle, Fergus Mac-Ivor, or Colonel Talbot. It is through experience—through actions—that Waverley learns to use his imagination appropriately and for the good of others. As Davis suggests, Waverley's use of imagination at the beginning of the novel is selfish and inward—he secludes himself from society and imagines a world built to please only himself. By the end of the novel, however, Waverley's imagination isn't repressed so much as it is redirected “through

imaginative sympathy” (Davis 452).

The unity between England and Scotland, Rose and Waverley, and past and present at the end of the novel is made possible by Waverley’s development of imaginative sympathy. The England initially depicted in *Waverley* is an England that is unsustainable: its arbitrarily aligned politics produce citizens who cannot align themselves with their own nations—and who are therefore doomed to waver without agency as Waverley does through much of the novel. Likewise, Scott’s initial depictions of Scotland reveal a similarly stagnant community that cannot coherently represent itself to outsiders. When Waverley rebuilds Tully-Veolan to be simultaneously new and old, he reinvigorates England and Scotland through his ability to sympathize with both sides. Through its popularity, *Waverley* helped to create a shared image of the past that offered a sense of continuity between England and Scotland. It is through the creation of this continuity that Scott buries divisive borders in the past, allowing his readers to imagine Great Britain as a nation that they, and the rest of their communities, are parts of.

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If Benedict Anderson is right in asserting that “Communities are to be distinguished [...] by the style in which they are imagined,” then the role of the novel in the evolution of the nation cannot be understated. Although it’s hard to imagine today, the modern novel was, at one point, “new.” It’s even more difficult to imagine that the novel was once an object of questionable morality; in the latter half of the 18th century through the beginning of the 19th century novel-reading was an act which required defending.¹⁸ The same can also be said of the nation; at one point the concept of “nation” was new—it was something which required explanation. In short, people didn’t become

national citizens overnight; the genesis of national imagined communities was not instantaneous. Rather, the nation was something that developed over time; its explanation was carried out over time as well. I've chosen to look at the development of nations in terms of novels because the novel was one important site among many where the modern nation was forged. As a new medium in the 18th and 19th century the novel grew up alongside the nation; they both gave and received influence from one another. Ultimately, the novel was one of the many elements that helped "style" the national imagined community.

Understanding the forces which helped shape the nation in the 19th century is of extreme importance in today's world. When Benedict Anderson first wrote *Imagined Communities*, the nation-form was strong enough that he could assert without naivety that "nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time" (Anderson 3). Today, a quarter-century past the second edition of *Imagined Communities*, this assertion doesn't necessarily ring false—but it does require some qualification. Just as the 18th and 19th century advances in print-capitalism united people together in radically new configurations, modern advances in media—especially the burgeoning cultures surrounding social media—are poised to do just the same. The Occupy Movement, for example, connected so many people in such a short span of time that it was and still is nearly incomprehensible. In just the last few months of 2011—between September 17th and December 31st, 2011—the Occupy movement grew from the initial activists on Wall Street to over 1,500 sites in more than seventy different nations (Erde 77). Just as nations call forth history to explain their present, so too does the Occupy Movement. Within days of its emergence, the Occupy Movement's multiple sub-groups

began the process of keeping and recording the movement's history.¹⁹ Whether viewed as successful or otherwise, the Occupy Movement presents us with a new configuration of community, and this is reflected through their use of new mediums to diffuse information.

Notes

¹ In this chapter I shall abbreviate my citations for *Waverley* to *W*.

² For Said, imaginative geographies refer to more than just the physical and poetic space of a location, but also of time: "there is no doubt that imaginative geography and history help the mind to intensify its own sense of itself by dramatizing the distance and difference between what is close to it and what is far away. This is no less true of the feelings we often have that we would have been more 'at home' in the sixteenth century or in Tahiti" (55).

³ In *Landscape and Locality*, James Reed argues that Scott authentically records the land (Reed 6). Saree Makdisi, on the other hand, staunchly opposes Reed's assertion. According to Makdisi, Scott's image of the Highlands is not only inauthentic but has supplanted "the real thing" (Makdisi 70).

⁴ Maeve Adams argues that *Waverley*'s first chapter reveals Scott's "self-proclaimed interest in reforming rhetorical (or persuasive) practices crucial to 'society[s] institutions'" (942). From this, Adams, like myself, sees the ways that Scott depicts historical and national consciousness emerging from social practices (949).

⁵ James Ballantyne, in a letter to Scott, wrote, "The account of the studies of *Waverley* seem unnecessarily minute. There are few novel-readers to whom it would be interesting" (qtd in Lockhart 300).

⁶ John Henry Raleigh suggests that Scott satirically presents England in an unexalted tone that is reminiscent of 18th century novels: “The whole first section of the novel, dealing with England, is in eighteenth century mode, a satiric anatomy of a complex, hierarchical, and varied society whose chief preoccupations are politics and religion, and whose *modus vivendi* is either resting on hereditary honors or getting ahead with any means at hand” (17).

⁷ For Wenger, engagement means “active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation of meaning,” imagination means “creating images of the world and seeing connections through time and space by extrapolating from our own experience,” and alignment means coordinating our energy and activities in order to fit within broader structures and contribute to broader enterprises” (173-74).

⁸ Bonny Norton draws from Etienne Wenger’s theories of engagement, imagination, and alignment in order to postulate that imagined communities necessitate and invite imagined identities that must be negotiated through time and space. See Bonny Norton’s “Non-Participation, Imagined Communities, and the Language Classroom.”

⁹ Wenger writes, “In fact, I was inspired to think about imagination as a source of community by [Benedict Anderson’s] use of the term ‘imagined community’ to account for the origins and spread of nationalism” (Wenger 294n2).

¹⁰ Wenger writes, “collective learning results in practices that reflect both the pursuit of our enterprises and the attendant social relations. These practices are thus the property of a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise. It makes sense, therefore, to call these kinds of communities *communities of practice*” (Wenger 45).

¹¹ Marilyn Orr also sees *Waverley* as a narrative about alignment. For Orr, *Waverley* is largely about the protagonist “learn[ing] to set his private time according to the public time of history” (715). Reading along as Waverley learns to adjust his sense of time, the reader, too, adjusts his or her own sense of historical knowledge to allow for the emergence of an historical experience (716).

¹² Wolfram Schmidgen explains that this is because the authority of the bear statues is based upon a “lived relation,” in other words, “something that is ‘known’ through the continuity of local custom” (192).

¹³ The term “recognizable totality” is borrowed from Graham Huggan’s “Decolonizing the Map.” For Huggan, a map is a “manifestation of the desire for control rather than [...] an authenticating seal of coherence” because maps fall victim to a “mimetic fallacy” (117). By this logic, a map presents itself as a “recognizable totality,” yet this totality is entirely an illusion: a map is not the world itself but rather a version of the world “which is specifically designed to empower its maker” (118).

¹⁴ James Buzard notes that not only is Scott’s inclusion of this painting ridiculous, but that the “touristic pleasure” that Waverley, Rose, the Baron, and all other attendants of the party is likewise absurd: “Only a perspectival leap from the time of the narrative to the time of Scott [...] can account for the touristic pleasure everyone at Tully-Veolan takes in what would, in 1746, have been comparable to an incriminating surveillance photo showing Edward’s collaboration with the enemy” (Buzard 89).

¹⁵ It is of note that earlier in the novel Waverley “could not be reconciled to [wear] the kilt” (128) and, much later, Waverley requires Callum’s “assistance and instructions” in order to “[adjust] his tartans in proper costume” (234). Examining these

two instances, we can see that *Waverley* rejects the Highland garb in the former and cannot understand how to appropriately wear it in the latter.

¹⁶ The Act of Proscription was, for most intents and purposes, a revision of the ineffective disarmament acts that took place after the Jacobite Rising of 1715. Included in the Act of Proscription was the Dress Act, which prohibited various cultural artifacts associated with the Highlands such as kilts, tartans, bagpipes, etc. (“Act of Proscription 1747). The Abolition of Heritable Jurisdiction Act of 1747 repealed Article XX from the Act of Union of 1707. Article XX of the 1707 Act of Union stated, “THAT all heritable Offices, Superiorities, heritable Jurisdictions, Offices for Life, and Jurisdictions for Life, be reserved to the Owners thereof, as Rights of Property, in the same Manner as they are now enjoyed by the Laws of Scotland, notwithstanding this Treaty” (Act of Union, 1707). For more on the post-rebellion treatment of the Highlanders please see Saree Makdisi’s “*Waverley* and the Cultural Politics of Dispossession” in *Romantic Imperialism* as well as Eric Richard’s *The Highland Clearances*.

¹⁷ Ina Ferris, in “‘Before Our Eyes’: Romantic Historical Fiction and the Apparitions of Reading,” similarly argues that *Waverley* contained a new way of experiencing both fiction and history “marked by exteriority and a particular kind of temporal suspension” which critics responded to with “the language of the senses, primarily, though not exclusively, that of the reading eye” (61). As a consequence, Scott’s final chapter—which foreshortens all of the history between the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 and present day into a single paragraph—relies more upon the juxtaposition of English and Scottish life than upon their progression from the past into the present (71).

¹⁸ See John Tinnon Taylor's *Early Opposition to the English Novel*.

¹⁹ John Erde's "Constructing the Archives of the Occupy Movement" explores the creation of the Occupy Movement's history. Erde notes that Occupy Wall Street and Occupy Philadelphia have been "two of the most active groups" in terms of "collect[ing] the records of Occupy working groups as well as physical ephemera from the protests, conduct[ing] oral history interviews and [seeking] solutions for the storage and preservation of the archives" (78).

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EDUCATION

Master of Arts in English

Aug. 2013-Present

Indiana University, South Bend

- GPA: 4.0

Bachelor of Arts in English

Completed Dec. 2010

Loyola University, Chicago

- Concentration in Literature Studies

Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education

Completed Dec. 2010

Loyola University, Chicago

- Concentration in Language Arts

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

“The Burial of Borders: *Waverley*’s Persuasive Cartography.” Conference Paper. NASSR 2015: Romanticism and Rights. Session Moderator: Lisa Kasmer. 15 Aug. 2015.

“Wilde’s Gender Line: The Limits to Mutable Identity in *An Ideal Husband*.” Publication. *IUSB Graduate Research Journal*, volume 2. 2015.

“I’d Miss it.” *Indiscernible Leaves: A Collection of Short Essays*. Prose. 2014.

“The Hyppogriffs are Flying the Carriage: The Lexicological Power of Ideology Surrounding Scott’s *Waverley*.” Conference Paper. IUSB Graduate Research Conference. Nov. 2013.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Indiana University, South Bend

Adjunct Faculty

Aug. 2014-Present

- W130: Principles of Composition
- W131: Reading, Writing, and Inquiry
 - Taught multiple sections of first-year writing courses which a focus on critical thinking, research abilities, and academic writing
 - Received consistently excellent course evaluations

Writers' Room Tutor

Jul. 2012-Present

- Offered individualized assistance through the Write-Well Program
- Served as an embedded writing tutor for IUSB's Summer Bridge Program
 - Successfully tutored students from nearly every degree path that IUSB offers on the graduate and undergraduate level

Ivy Tech Community College, South Bend

SLA Instructor

Jan. 2014-Aug. 2014

- Served as an embedded tutor for an introductory math course
- Led mandatory two hour study sessions once a week for students
 - Planned lessons and created worksheets to assist students during study sessions

Math/English Tutor

Jan. 2014-Aug. 2014

- Tutored a wide variety of students on a walk-in and appointment basis
 - Provided tutoring in a wide array of topics including but not limited to: computer literacy, research skills, study skills, computational math, close reading, and writing

Penn High School, Mishawaka

After-School English Teacher

Feb. 2012-May 2012

- Planned and taught after-school English courses for at-risk students
 - Offered after-school classes focused on remedial writing, reading, and study skills for nearly fifty students in danger of failing Indiana's End of Course Assessment (ECA)

Math Tutor

Feb. 2012-Jun. 2012

- Served as an embedded tutor in remedial Algebra I/II courses
- Researched and implemented my own tutoring schedule which prioritized students who would benefit most from small-group tutoring
 - Created a plan to take 5-8 students out of study hall twice per week for half an hour to work on test-taking abilities and computational math; Successfully worked with over fifty students per day without compromising efficiency

Long-Term Substitute 9th/10th Grade English Instructor

Aug. 2011-Feb. 2012

- Collaborated with a team of teachers to create Penn High School's English 10 and English 10 Honors curriculums
 - Fulfilled all responsibilities of an English teacher including but not limited to: grading, compiling student data, and leading remedial study sessions for struggling students
 - Coached Penn High School's Mock Trial teams; successfully brought a team of sophomores to the state-level competition
-

ACADEMIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Served as President of IUSB's Graduate School of English Club (January 2014-present); organized multiple GSEC events including but not limited to: book sales, poetry/fiction readings, and potlucks for students and faculty
- Worked as a volunteer barista at "The Well," a not-for-profit coffee shop that serves and assists South Bend and Mishawaka's local communities; Sep. 2014-Present
- Editor for IUSB's 2014 Graduate Research Journal
- 2011-2012 head coach of Penn High School's Mock Trial Program; coached six teams, including a team of sophomores who won the regional competition and placed within the top 20 at the state competition; the following year this team went on to win the state competition and compete in the 2014 National Mock Trial Competition

RELEVANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Won the 2013 Research Award at IUSB's Graduate Research Conference for "The Hyppogriffs are Flying the Carriage: The Lexicological Power of Ideology Surrounding Scott's *Waverley*"
- Completed 550+ hours of student teaching along with 160+ hours of teacher observation for my Bachelor of Science in Education; taught and observed in a wide variety of Chicago schools including but not limited to: Amundsen High School, Senn High School, Chicago Waldorf School, and the Frances Xavier Warde School
- Took two French conversation courses in Aix-en-Provence France over the summer of 2009

RELEVANT COURSE WORK

- L501: Romantic Novels and the Historical Subject; Prof. Kyoko Takanashi
- L502: Contexts for the Study of Writing: Literacy; Prof. Ken Smith
- G660: Stylistics; Prof. Ken Smith
- L695: Independent Study: Literary Theory; Prof. Lee Kahan
- L699: Master's Thesis; Prof. Kyoko Takanashi
- L680: Special Topics Courses
 - L680: Postcolonial Theory and Literature; Prof. Chu He
 - L680: 20th Century American Poetry; Prof. David Dodd Lee
 - L680: Late Victorian Literature; Prof. Karen Gindele
 - L680: Radical Modernisms; Prof. Benjamin Balthaser

REFERENCES

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